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AN INQUIRY
INTO THE STATE
OF
THE ACADEMIES
AND
THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS
IN IRELAND.

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INTO
THE ABUSES
OF
THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS
IN IRELAND.

EDUCATION OF THE LOWER CLASSES
IN THAT COUNTRY.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR J. B. L. LONDON
BY J. B. L. LONDON

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INTO
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OF
THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS
IN IRELAND.

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Greville Street, Hatton Garden, London.

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OF
THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS
IN IRELAND.

WITH REMARKS
UPON THE
EDUCATION OF THE LOWER CLASSES
IN THAT COUNTRY.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THOMAS AND GEORGE UNDERWOOD,

32, FLEET STREET.

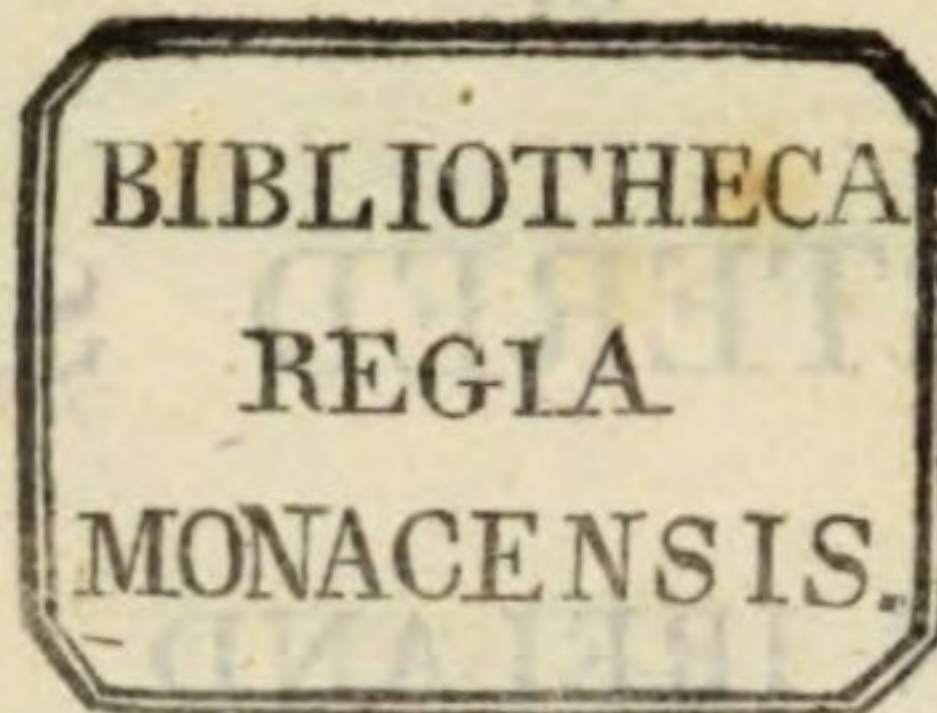
1818.

AN INQUIRY

INTO

THE ABUSES

OF



THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS

IN THE KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN

WITH REMARKS

ON THE

EDUCATION OF THE LOWER CLASSES

IN THAT COUNTRY.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THOMAS AND GEORGE UNDERWOOD,

15, FLEET STREET.

DEDICATION.

To the Honourable the SELECT COMMITTEE of the HOUSE of COMMONS, on the Education of the lower Orders of the Metropolis.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I KNOW not to whom I can, with so much propriety, dedicate the following pages on the state of Education in Ireland, as to you, who have so meritoriously exerted yourselves, during the last Session of Parliament, in the investigation of the various Charitable Institutions for the Education of the Poor of the Metropolis. It would have been well, had this taken place before the moral malady arising from ignorance, had acquired so much strength. But it is not now too

late. I hope that the sentiment is now general, that nothing, under the blessing of God, is so well calculated to restore the moral tone of the Country, and elevate the poor from their present depression, as Education; an Education grounded on the Sacred Scriptures. Let all the children be taught to read, let their minds and memories be early stored with the truths of Holy Writ, and I doubt not, but that, in due time, one half of the prisons, now crowded with felons, will be more than enough for all the purposes of justice. The brief Sketch of *some* of the abuses connected with education in Ireland, which I have given, must convince every honest man, who loves his Country, that your labours are but commencing. What I have stated respecting the Chartered Schools, is but of one stall in this stable of Augeas. To Parliament, as the rightful Guardian of the Country's honour

and happiness, do I look for an investigation.

The day is surely past, in which a British Public can endure such enormous abuses as these.

If a desire, manifested on your part, to render that important Branch of the United Empire a brighter jewel in the Imperial Crown—if a wish of extending the blessings of a good education to the poor in general—if a regard for the moral regeneration of Ireland, fail in awakening to an Inquiry; the responsibility will lie with Parliament.

I have done what I could to bring the momentous subject before you. If the result be beneficial to Ireland, I shall be abundantly rewarded.

I am,

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient humble Servant,

ROBERT STEVEN.

LONDON, 13th June, 1817.

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I am,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient humble servant,

ROBERT STEVEN.

London, 14th June, 1817.

INQUIRY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

WERE an intelligent traveller, unacquainted with our history, to visit Britain; and, after surveying England and Scotland with the eye of a Christian philosopher, to cross St. George's Channel to the sister country; he could not easily be persuaded that the latter formed a part, a most important part, of the United Empire. He would ask, with astonishment, how it was, that a country, so highly favoured by the God of nature and providence, possessing so many advantages of a local kind*, should, notwithstanding, exhibit such a contrast? He would inquire, how long that island had formed a part of the British dominions? He would investigate the character and genius of her natives; and would conclude, that there were certainly in Ireland some hidden obstacles to the course of national improvement, which occasioned the vast disparity.

* To use the words of an Irish Senator, "The country
"for which God has done so much, and man so little."

How would his wonder be excited, when he found her sons industrious and enterprising; and, as a people, possessing intellect, genius, and perseverance, equally, at least, with the inhabitants of England and Scotland! What, would he ask, has thrown this interesting portion of the empire centuries behind? What mistaken policy has chained down the genius and energies of the people in ignorance and superstition, and checked the progress of civilisation and religion?

Passing over the earlier history of Ireland, we find, that from the reign of Henry the Eighth it became a favourite object with the English Government to eradicate the Irish language. The statesmen of that day, and even of later times, did not understand, that the destruction of a living language by force, even of a conquered country, could only be effected by the extermination of the people.

Every attempt served only to attach them more fondly to the language of their forefathers, and induced them to cling with more enthusiastic affection to the last relic of their ancient independence. About the year 1537, a law was passed, to render general the use of the English language, habit, and order*. English schools were to be opened, and

* After stating, that "nothing doth more conteyne and keep many of his subjects of the said land in a certain wild and

the children compelled to learn that foreign tongue*. The road to spiritual preferment was confined to those who could speak English. As might have been expected, the English language made little way. What was done by the Government in the way of education was more from political motives, than any wish for the moral improvement of the people. Accustomed to consider the existence of the Irish language as hostile to the interests of England, they carried their antipathy so far as to order, that when no minister could be found capable of reading the Liturgy in English, it should be read in Latin.

Who can look back on the condition of Ireland at that time, without the deepest regret? Several millions of our fellow-subjects, age after age, shut up in the grossest ignorance and superstition! No Protestant ministers, no Protestant schoolmasters, who could instruct them in their own language, were provided for them. Thus were they left to

savage kind and manner of living," it enacts, that the Irish habit and apparel should be abolished, and the form in which the Irish wore their hair discontinued; and orders that "every person shall use and speak the English tongue."

* No Catholic, under Henry's severe penalties, could keep a school. This system pervaded the subsequent reigns of Elizabeth, James, Charles, William, and Ann; and out of this arose those princely endowments of what, by a strange perversion of terms, are called *Free Schools*.

the devious impulse of an untutored mind, the influence of the priest became doubly augmented, whilst that of the Protestant teacher was proportionably diminished. In proof of this, I need only state, that those counties which are properly Irish, where the English is rarely spoken, are considered as consisting chiefly of Catholics*. There the proportion of Protestants is very small.

Had the Highlands of Scotland been treated in a similar manner; had the same mistaken policy obtained there; had Protestant ministers refused to instruct the people in their own language, and had the Gaelic been confined to the missionaries of Rome; who, that is acquainted with the Highland character, does not perceive what would have been the consequence? Happily for Caledonia, her sons, in their own tongue, wherein they were born, have heard their instructors declare the wonderful works of God.

The statesmen and philosophers of Ireland did not understand, that the surest way to bring the Irish language into disuse was to give the people the Scriptures, and teach them to read them in their native tongue. In this way a thirst after know-

* The Protestants took early possession of the valleys and fertile lands belonging to the Catholics, and forced them to the barren mountains and bogs; and so late as 1794, the cant word with the Orange men towards the Catholics, was, "To Hell, or to Connaught!"

ledge is created, which cannot be gratified without learning to read English. This fact has been proved most satisfactorily in the instances of the Principality of Wales, and in the Highlands of Scotland. Since the introduction of Welsh and Gaelic schools, the number of English readers has rapidly increased. It might have been expected that the experience of nearly three centuries would have convinced the promoters of the old prohibitory system of its inefficiency, and have led them to pursue a different course: and happy would it have been for Ireland had a more enlightened spirit prevailed. Even so late as the year 1808, the same mistaken policy prevailed, and manifested itself strongly when the British and Foreign Bible Society proposed the printing of the Scriptures in the Irish language: the Committee applied to different clergymen and religious bodies in that country for their opinion on the propriety and necessity of the measure; and their decision and their arguments were against it.

The Committee, happily for Ireland, felt nothing of those prejudices, under which its correspondents sought to discourage the humane undertaking. Having given the Scriptures to two out of three of the Celtic tribes, why should they be withheld from the third? And this people most of all in need of instruction. Oh! said some, the Irish

is the language of rebellion, and must not be encouraged. Another urged, as a reason for not giving them the Scriptures in the only language they could speak, their not being able to read; forgetting, that no people ever yet learned to read until they had books. Give them books, and they have the means and the inducement to learn.

The history of Ireland records many humane attempts on the part of the English Government, and of individuals, to ameliorate the civil and moral condition of the people; but all their plans have been rendered more or less abortive. The names of WALSH, BEDELL, BOYLE, and RICHARDSON, as the benefactors of Ireland, are embalmed in the memory of every enlightened Irishman.

It is now about a century since the deplorable ignorance of the Irish attracted the attention of benevolent persons in England, and led them to commence and promote many charitable institutions in Ireland. Amongst these were the Chartered, or English Protestant Schools.

It was reserved for the illustrious House of Brunswick to give body and permanency to a general plan of education for the poor of Ireland. And how well the succeeding Princes, and especially our present beloved Sovereign, George the Third, has maintained this noble and gene-

rous, benevolent and enlightened sentiment, I need not say*.

In the year 1733, King George the Second (in the 6th of his reign) incorporated by *charter* a Society for the encouragement of Protestant Schools throughout Ireland. The *professed object* was to put down Popery, and extend the Protestant religion; but its actual operation went to the kidnapping of children of Catholics above six years of age, and afterwards at the age of two years, and removing them from their parents to the distant provinces of the kingdom, the better to prevent all communications with their relations. George the Second very liberally granted to this Society £1000 a year out of his own privy purse.

* It was the benevolent wish of George the Well-beloved, "that there might not be a child in all his dominions unable to read the Bible." And in no reign has science been more liberally encouraged.

CHAPTER II.

PLAN OF THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS SOCIETY,
AND THEIR PROGRESS UP TO 1767.

THE management of the Chartered Schools is vested in a Committee of Fifteen, who meet in Dublin as often as business requires.

The first officer is a Secretary, who has a fine mansion provided for him, handsomely furnished, coals, candles, &c. found him, with a large salary. The next is a Register and Clerk, with a liberal salary. Then Travelling Inspectors, with large incomes and road expenses. These are followed by an Architect, a Physician, a Surgeon, and an Apothecary. I think I see a smile on the countenances of some at this long procession of office-bearers in the Chartered School Establishment.

It is true we order things rather differently on this side of the Channel. Were we strangers to the extent of the Society's operations, we should, on seeing the Committee of Fifteen entering their hall, followed by this long train, conclude that their schools were surely to be found in every parish. But how great would be our surprise, on being told, that in the year 1816 they had

only thirty-three schools, containing about 2500 children!

Were this Society in London, it is very probable that some public-spirited person would volunteer his services as gratuitous Secretary, having a Clerk under him at £50 per annum.

The children are boarded, clothed, educated, and taught different trades. The age of admission now is from six to ten. At the age of fourteen they are, or ought to be, apprenticed out, with a fee of seven pounds seven shillings with the girls, and five pounds five shillings with the boys. They also give a premium of three pounds three shillings to those who, at the close of their apprenticeship, produce a satisfactory testimonial of good conduct; and a marriage portion of five pounds on his or her marrying a Protestant, if claimed within seven years of the expiration of their apprenticeship, and six months after their marriage.

The annual royal grant, together with benefactions from England, formed the Society's chief dependence for many years. I believe the first trace of this Society, as recognised by the Irish Parliament, was in 1745. In that year, the managers sent in a petition for a grant of money; wherein they stated, that they had erected twenty-two schools, containing five hundred and eleven children; and for the greater security of their religion, and to prevent their relapsing into Popery, care had been

taken to transplant them to schools distant from their parents and Popish relations.

Who could blame a Catholic parent for revolting at the thought of entrusting his infant into the hands of strangers? This measure left him the only sad alternative, of either sacrificing parental affection, or sealing up his offspring in ignorance and superstition! And do we bring the present state of the Catholic population as a charge against them? In truth, we are principals in the offence. O! it is full time to change our measures. Let the Country, let Parliament, act liberally. Justice compromises no right, and sacrifices no principle. This first petition also stated, that they had apprenticed two hundred and ninety-four children; and, observe, that all this had been done by an income of £1000 a year from the royal purse, and private benefactions. The only step taken by Parliament on that petition, was to bring in a bill, to compel pedlars and hawkers to take out licenses; and the duties arising from these were appropriated to the Society. The produce was about £1100 per annum.

I have dwelt longer on this first petition, because it shews the original design of this Establishment, and how much was done at that time with comparatively small funds. As we pursue the history of these schools, we shall see cause to regret that an increase of benefit was not in the ratio of increased funds. In the act above alluded to, we

have the origin of the landed property belonging to the Chartered Schools, which has now become most extensive and valuable, producing a very large revenue, independent of parliamentary grants. By the provisions of this act, Bishops and other clergy were enabled each to grant the Society two acres of land, free; and this being a very popular Protestant measure, a great aggregate extent of land was acquired. It also enabled tenants for life and in tail to grant leases of thirty acres for ever; which, by the subsequent rise in the value of land, added immensely to the income of the Society.

On the 2d of November, 1751, we find the Society again petitioning Parliament for assistance. They then stated, that, by the aid of Parliament, the royal bounty, with annual subscriptions and benefactions, they had built forty schools, and dwelling-houses for the accommodation of the masters and children; they had one thousand four hundred children under instruction, and had apprenticed five hundred; and that four more schools were finished, capable of lodging one hundred and sixty more scholars. Let the number of schools, the total of children educating and apprenticed, the expense of building and furnishing houses for lodging all these, and this done by the comparatively small funds then possessed by the Society, be compared with the present state of the schools, only thirty-three, and two thousand six hundred and seventy-eight

children*, with annual grants of £41,000, besides the large permanent funds; and let those who have the management satisfactorily account for the difference.

It may be replied, that the advance on provisions and clothing must make a difference: but this, though granted, will by no means account satisfactorily for the surplus expenditure.

It appears that £5000 were granted at this time, together with two-thirds of the fines levied on gaming. My readers will recollect that the Irish Parliament at that time met only once in two years.

In the year 1753, on their again petitioning the House, they addressed the Lord-Lieutenant to recommend to the King a farther grant of £5000.

In 1755, the Society petitioned again, praying for general aid. The House addressed the Viceroy to recommend to His Majesty to give them £10,000 of his royal bounty. This was of course granted.

The Society applied again in 1757 for help, stating, that they had erected a nursery in Dublin; that they had forty-four schools in different parts of the kingdom for the reception of one thousand seven hundred and seventy children, male and female; that they were under engagements for building some additional schools; and that more were applied for. A new fact is stated in this petition,

* According to the Society's statement.

viz. that they found it difficult to procure children to fill the schools, except in a time of scarcity; but that if they were enabled to build nurseries for the reception of three or four hundred children under six years of age, they might then provide a constant supply for their schools.

This year the Parliament granted £5000 to build four nurseries, one in each province, to hold one hundred children, and a farther sum of £7000 to enable them to build more schools.

In 1759, they again petitioned the House, stating, that they had finished forty-six schools, capable of containing two thousand children, exclusive of the nursery in Dublin; that one thousand eight hundred were then actually boarded, clothed, and educated, in the schools; that the erection of so many schools, and *improving their lands*, had been a great charge; that they were then building several new schools, four of which at least would be opened in the following summer; and that they had contracted for erecting six more; that two of the provincial nurseries were finished, and a third in great forwardness; and that they had obtained ground for the fourth, and intended to build it with all expedition.

Permit me again to call the attention of my readers to the state of the Society, as presented to the Irish House of Commons in 1759. There were then forty-six schools; the nursery in Dublin,

forty-seven; the four schools to be opened the following summer, fifty-one; six more building, fifty-seven; and the four provincial nurseries, sixty-one; being, in all, nearly double the present number; so that, in the year 1760, there must have been more children under their care than in the year 1816. How is this to be accounted for, with at least five times the amount of income, and a reduced number of children? And let it be farther observed, when we read of £4000, of £5000, or of £7000, granted at this early period, that these sums were almost exclusively laid out in the building and furnishing of schools; which expenses having long since ceased, the contrast between the expenditure of the year 1760 and the present, as hereafter stated at £60,000 per annum, becomes the more striking. And let it be also recollected, that those grants were for two years; whereas now, in place of £4000 for two years, they receive £41,000 for one year, with fewer schools, and less outgoings of extra expenditure.

In the year 1760, the Society obtained a private act, vesting in them the large estates of the Earl of Ranelagh, for the erection of two schools; one at Athlone, the other at Roscommon.

They afterwards became possessed of Bishop Pococke's property, for which they engaged to support one school at Kilkenny.

This brings down the history of the Society to the close of the reign of George the Second.

On the 31st of October, 1761, the Society petitioned, stating, as in former cases, their progress. They had at that time forty-seven schools, and two thousand children, besides the Dublin nursery; two of the provincial nurseries had been occupied with children; a third was finished; and they were proceeding with the fourth.

This petition was referred to a Committee, to inquire into the state of the Society's concerns, and to report whether any farther aid was necessary. On the 10th of November, the Committee reported, and the House resolved, that these schools could not be carried on without the aid of Parliament; *and from this period they became permanently under their patronage.* They granted them £12,000, to enable them to finish the buildings, and for the support of the children in the schools and nurseries.

In the statement presented to Parliament this year, after enumerating a variety of matters, they proceeded to inform the House, that they had not been able, from want of funds, to receive any children into the Leinster nursery, at Monasteraven; but that *twenty infants had been found exposed among the carpenters' shavings in the building,* which the Society recommended should be main-

tained at the workhouse*. And they farther stated, that it would require £2000 per annum, to sup-

* It is not unworthy of inquiry, Whether the system of *tempting* mothers to part with their infants, to fill the nurseries of the Chartered Schools Society, has not contributed to deaden the maternal feeling, and lead them to perpetrate a deed, at which humanity shudders. And here permit me to hint at another Institution, the Foundling Hospital of Dublin, which for many years has been waging war against all those feelings which are so honourable to the female character. This Society also seems to have arisen out of a mistaken zeal for the increase of something under the name of the Protestant religion.

The Foundling Hospital was to be a sort of Protestant manufactory. They were to receive Popish infants into the charity, (how they discerned a Popish infant from a Protestant, I know not,) where, by a certain process, they were prepared to go out staunch Protestants. Did the managers of the Foundling Hospital think there was less maternal affection among Catholic than among Protestant mothers? Let any person take his station near the Foundling gate, and he will soon descry a female approaching with a slow and hesitating step. As she comes nearer, he observes, by the position of her arms, and her blue cloak carefully wrapped round, that she is carrying an infant. She walks up to the little wicket; she puts out her hand tremblingly to ring the bell: she draws back, and returns her hand again to clasp her babe. Who can describe a mother's feelings at that moment?

After many a struggle, she at last forms the fatal resolution to ring the bell. She does so; and instantly there is presented to her a small cradle, into which she deposits the infant. The cradle is turned round, and the wicket shuts for ever on the little stranger, without the mother seeing the countenance of

port four hundred children, with their nurses, in the four provincial nurseries.

This Report farther stated, that the expense of supporting forty-seven schools, and the nurseries for the last year, had been £9052. 1s. 9d. ; that the number of children apprenticed between the 1st of May, 1759, and the 1st of August, 1761, were four hundred and eight ; that the Society admitted only the children of Popish parents, or such for whom undoubted certificates were produced ; and

the person who receives it. Unhappy babe ! wrecked on the very first verge of life ! The infant is carried into a public nursery, where wet-nurses are kept to suckle the little outcasts, till others can be procured for them in the country. What a train of feelings did it awaken in the breast of the writer, when, on entering the public nursery, he saw a great number of double cradles for the accommodation of two children in each, and he looked on the young sufferers, doomed never to know the thousand endearments of a mother's love ! By a report of the Foundling Hospital, the average of infants thus admitted, annually, is about two thousand one hundred and twenty-nine. What a system ! I have been informed, on good authority, that one instance has occurred, in consequence of this mode of admission, of a mother marrying her own son ! And who can tell how many brothers and sisters have, in ignorance of their near relationship to each other, united in marriage ? Who will not condemn that system, which, among many other evils, goes to confound and destroy that family identity, which preserves us from a violation of the Divine Law, so conducive to the happiness of Society ?

who, if not received into the schools, would probably be bred Papists.

In 1763, the Society again applied to Parliament, setting forth, that they had forty-nine schools, which, with the four provincial, and the Dublin nurseries, made fifty-four schools. They farther stated the number of children at one thousand nine hundred; that the Society had agreed for building new schools at Enniscorthy, in the county of Wexford; at Tarbor, in Limerick; at Cottensboro, in Cork; at Feathard, in Tipperary; at Balingderry and Randalstown, in Antrim; at Newmarket, in Clare; and at Monasteraven, in Kildare: not one of which are now to be found on their list. They went on to state, that they had expended, during the preceding year, in support of all their schools, £9404. 14s. 9d.; and in the year before that, £11,141. 8s. 4½d. In consequence of this representation, the Parliament voted them £12,000 for the next two years, and £7000 for carrying into effect the building and furnishing of the new schools above enumerated; but I can find no proof of one of them having ever been built. On a fair calculation, arising out of the documents presented by the Society, it does appear, that, even with a great annual expense for building school-houses for the masters, for furniture, &c., less than £12,000 a year was sufficient for the support of fifty-four

schools, and one thousand nine hundred children. *It remains therefore to be accounted for, how, in the year 1816, with a reduction of more than twenty schools, and consequently of masters' salaries, land, and board for themselves and families, &c., with but a small increase of children, and without the heavy expense of building school-houses, the Society has been receiving annually, from Parliament, £41,539, independent of perhaps not less than £20,000 of fixed annual income. No change in the value of money, prices of provisions, or clothing, can fairly account for this*.*

In the year 1765, they obtained £12,000 ; and in the year 1767, they also obtained a like sum of £12,000 from the Irish Parliament, with which I shall conclude this first epocha of the Society's affairs.

* It appears that in the course of twenty-two years from 1745 to 1767, the Society received from Parliament, and the royal bounty, £112,200.

CHAPTER III.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY,

FROM 1767 TO 1788.

ON the 13th of November, 1769, the Society again petitioned, setting forth former matters, &c.; and also, that, in the five nurseries and fifty-two schools, two thousand one hundred children were clothed and maintained, &c.; that the annual expense of the establishment, on a medium of the preceding seven years, good and bad, was £11,371. 11s. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; that the Society had also for many years supported a nursery and infirmary in York-street, Dublin, for the immediate reception of such children as were admitted there, or sent from schools in the country to be apprenticed, or *transplanted to parts remote from their Popish relations*; that the quantities of provisions allowed for the children, by a dietary formerly settled and agreed to by the Society, were insufficient; that the yearly allowance for the clothing of each child being too low, they had found themselves under the necessity of increasing the allowance; that the Society having also taken into consideration, *that a great number of schools were dispersed in*

*many parts of the kingdom, under the tuition of Popish masters, contrary to the sense of several Acts of Parliament; and that, as opening the understanding, and giving youth some kind of liberal education, bid fairest to make them good subjects, and to reform them from the errors of Popery**; they therefore submitted to Parliament, that it would greatly promote the Protestant religion, if the Society were enabled to establish a sufficient number of day-schools throughout the kingdom, with Protestant masters to instruct the children of the lower class of people in reading and the Church Catechism. This petition was referred to a Committee, to examine and report on its contents.

On the 1st of November, 1771, a petition of the Society, (as to its contents the same as that of 1769,) was presented; which stated, that they had, from the commencement, in 1733, till lately, maintained, &c. the children at the same rate, and without any increase of charge; but that they

* So we find, that whilst Protestants were, in a great measure, neglecting the education of the poor, the Catholics were engaged in teaching their children to read, yet at the hazard of incurring pains and penalties. I cannot but admire the reasoning of the Chartered School Committee: whilst they admit the importance of learning to read, they argue as if it were better to remain in ignorance, than be taught by a Roman Catholic master.

had been obliged to make a separate allowance for the diet of the masters and mistresses, who till then had no allowance*; adding, that every thing was upon the principle of strict economy, and according to the tenets of the Protestant religion; and that they had applied to His Majesty, who had granted them £7000. The Parliament granted them, on this petition, £15,000.

On the 2d of November, 1773, they again petitioned for help; stating, that they had erected a nursery on the Milltown-road, (now sold, and a palace in Kevin-street, formerly Archbishop Synge's, purchased in its stead); that they thought of discontinuing some of their schools, which were not well situated, and increasing the number of children in the remaining schools, by which a saving of officers, servants, repairs, &c. could be made; that they found twenty-five of the schools were well circumstanced, and twenty-seven (in all fifty-two) badly so; that no school for the future should have less than forty or fifty children, in place of twenty or thirty, as heretofore; that they had applied to the landlords of the twenty-seven badly circumstanced schools, to know, before they surrendered, what they would give by contributing thereto, or by granting new and perpetual leases, agreeably

* I suppose they supplied themselves out of the children's allowances.

to Act of Parliament, of the school-lands, &c.; that this plan had been so successful, for the Society had resolved on getting answers, that nineteen out of the twenty-seven declared to be badly circumstanced, were now well circumstanced, and the answers satisfactory; that leases *of fourteen out of the nineteen* should be immediately executed, and the *eight above the nineteen* should be surrendered, and the children removed to other schools.

This petition went on to state, that the Society had removed from those eight schools 190 children, and divided them amongst sixteen other schools, at the small expense of £50, except bedding.

The Committee of the House, to which this petition was referred, reported, *that the Society had answered the ends of their appointment, had proceeded with economy, and had lessened the number of their schools, without reducing the number of children, and that they deserved the aid of Parliament.*

It is a question of some importance to the Country, to know what became of the sixteen schools; being the number between the forty-four (out of the fifty-two schools) which were declared to be well circumstanced, and were retained, and the five nurseries; making a total of forty-nine. What has become of the deficiency of sixteen, between forty-nine and the present number, which are only thirty-three, including the nurseries? Six-

teen national schools have been lost to Ireland between 1775 and the time of the Union: twenty of which years were the most prosperous that Ireland ever saw.

In 1777, the Society petitioned the House in rather a bolder style; no doubt in consequence of the Chartered Schools now being thought sufficiently important to occupy a distinct paragraph in the speeches from the throne. In this petition, after noticing the usual topics, they declared that they educated and maintained two thousand children annually at an expense of £12,000; which, to prove their ability to direct the arithmetical department, they thought it necessary to shew, only amounted to £6 per child; *not a farthing more nor less*. But as the £12,000 included all expenses of the establishment, so it was incumbent on them to add, by way of making their statement plain, that the £6 expended "*on the maintenance of each child*" also included "salaries of masters, mistresses, wages of servants, payment of rents, repairs of buildings, and all other incidental charges;" of course including clothing, though not named. The Parliament and the Irish public were certainly much obliged to the Committee of the Chartered Schools, for saving them the trouble of calculating how much two thousand children, at £6 each, cost in the whole; but

it would have been kinder still, if they had analyzed the account, by telling them how much the education of each child cost, then what his clothing cost, and what his feeding cost, and give these three component parts of the £6 a year : and then on looking at the revenue of the Society, we might, by a very simple process, shew what it cost to support those who are mere excrescences on the establishment.

Their calculations were, however, deemed so clear and satisfactory, that Parliament voted them £12,500.

On the 20th of November, 1779, they again petitioned ; and, perhaps, from a hint privately conveyed, more modestly than in 1777.

They merely stated, that they educated and maintained, in forty-two schools and four nurseries, (in all forty-six,) about two thousand children. But, notwithstanding the word "*about*," leaving the exact number of two thousand doubtful, *be the sum more or less, still it is, even including rent, &c. &c. &c. £6 only for each child.*

The House of Commons, on the motion of the Attorney-General, however, arrived at the same conclusion, that whether it was one thousand nine hundred, or two thousand one hundred, or any fractional number over or under two thousand, so as the expense was clearly £12,000, it could

not, by any rule of arithmetic, exceed £6 per child. Perhaps the reader on this side of St. George's Channel will think this conclusion of the Irish Parliament a little in character.

On the 8th of November, 1781, the Society again petitioned, and, after stating the number of schools, and the children educating, &c. &c., complained, that formerly they received *parliamentary grants of £15,000 for two years, but of late sessions only £12,500**, which was insufficient to answer the purposes of the Society. Notwithstanding this, the House only granted them £10,000; but they received also a grant from the Crown of £1000 per month for eighteen months.

On the 10th of November, 1783, they again petitioned. But a material change had taken place in the character and independence of the Irish Parliament in 1782: and so little attention was paid to their application, that they took offence: for the House voted them only £5000.

The same year, however, Parliament granted £1000 distinct from the Chartered Schools, for the encouragement of day-schools throughout the kingdom†.

* This proves clearly, that the grants from Parliament were for two years, and not annually; and that even then they were deemed capable of reduction.

† It is worthy of inquiry, what use was made of this £1000, and what day-schools were supported by it.

On the 24th of March, 1784, the Society petitioned the House, stating boldly, that, finding they were recommended to Parliament by his Excellency at the opening of the sessions, they applied for aid to enable them to carry on the Institution ; adding, that, from the lowness of their funds, and having only received £5000 in the former year, which was quite inadequate, they now applied under the most urgent circumstances, for advice and assistance ; as, from the smallness of the late grants, the petitioners were afraid that some unfavourable and ill-founded reports had been made to their prejudice ; that without a farther grant of £7100 and upwards, to support the Institution until aid could be had in the next session, they must very greatly reduce the schools, and turn the children upon the public, which they could not think of doing without apprising the House. This petition was ordered to lie on the table ; but nothing was done : for such was the growing independence of the Irish Parliament, that not a member was found who would even venture to move for its being referred to a Committee.

On the 1st of February, 1785, the Society again petitioned the House, stating, that their annual expenses were 12,000 ; but they gave no account of schools, nor number of children. They only stated, that their usual yearly income amounted

to no more than *about* £7000* : whence we may safely conclude it exceeded it.

On the 12th of February, the Chancellor of the Exchequer reported on this petition, and on the 17th of February the House voted £9000. Here a very serious evil arose. It had been usual to include all the charitable grants in the bill of supply ; but on this occasion, and ever afterwards, separate bills were brought in for each ; which took about £800 from each charity, merely to benefit the clerks and officers of Parliament †.

By this time the business of the Irish Parliament had so increased, as to require annual sessions to be held, in place of only once in two years ; or at least they procrastinated their sessions, by periodical attendances, during two years. Henceforth, consequently, the grants to the Society became annual.

On the 19th of January, 1786, the Lord-Lieutenant opened the session by a speech, in which he says :

* By the Society's statement, delivered in to Parliament, they admit their annual income, independent of public aid, to be *about* £7000. How do they reconcile this with their return of income, (see page 76,) where they state the whole of their income for 1783 at £8213. 16s. 9½d. whilst it stood thus :

Received from estates, &c. £7000.

Parliamentary grant..... 5000.

————— £12000.

† This evil does not exist in the Imperial Parliament.

“ It is unnecessary for me to recommend the Protestant Chartered Schools to your protection, &c., and to such measures as may animate the industry, and extend the education, and improve the morals of the people.” The reply of the House was an exact echo.

On the 26th of January, 1786, the Society petitioned, stating the above recommendation: and on the 9th of February they obtained a vote of £9000.

On the 1st of February, 1787, a petition was presented much in the same style as in former years, but stating, that in consequence of the high price of woollens, the Society had been obliged to allow five shillings additional for each child's clothing in the schools, which brought their yearly clothing to one pound ten shillings each, and in the nurseries to one pound two shillings, which occasioned a gross additional expenditure of four hundred and twenty-seven pounds ten shillings.

On the 6th of February, the House voted them £11,000.

On the 29th of January, 1788, they petitioned for aid, stating, that it would give them great pleasure if a minute inquiry were made into the funds, expenses, and proceedings of the Society; that from such inquiry, they were persuaded Parliament would grant sufficient aid. It is a bold policy for an individual, or a Society, under a consciousness of guilt, to invite investigation; it is calculated to lull suspicion

asleep. In the course of the preceding year, they had been obliged to allow an additional farthing a head for the scholars in the country for their board, which raised it from two-pence to two-pence farthing per diem. (In Dublin and vicinity they had allowed three-pence for the board of each child.) They were now, for once, compelled to state the actual number of scholars; and instead of two thousand two hundred, as had been alleged, there were only one thousand six hundred and sixty. This petition was referred to a Committee, empowered to send for persons, papers, and records, in which all members who chose to attend were to have a voice. The first Report was unsatisfactory; the Committee having received the managers' own statement without investigation. But the Committee afterwards entered upon a real and strict inquiry, and produced one of the most extraordinary documents, on the subject of Irish Charity Schools, that the records of Parliament can exhibit.

In that Report, which I shall immediately give a copy of, the Committee brought the managers of the Chartered Schools Society, and their inferior agents, before the House of Commons and the public, and convicted them of false returns to Parliament, neglect of duty, and such a scene of profligate abuse of the public money, as is seldom to be met with. Instead of the children being

educated, they were, at a very early age, compelled to labour, for eight hours at a time, for the profit of the masters. These unhappy infants were kept without shirts or shifts, almost naked, and half starved; their beds were filthy; and, in some instances, only seven beds were provided for twenty-four children, without proper covering. As for education, it was totally out of the question; children remaining eight, ten, and twelve years in the schools, who could neither read nor spell; and as to personal cleanliness, they were overrun with vermin. But I must refer to the Report itself.

CHAPTER IV.

REPORT OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE, ON THE STATE OF THE PROTESTANT CHARTERED SCHOOLS OF IRELAND: EXTRACTED FROM THE JOURNALS OF THE IRISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.

[Reported by the Right Honourable Mr. SECRETARY OF STATE.]

“ LUNÆ, 14^o DIE APRILIS, 1788.

“ MR. SPEAKER,

“ THE Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the Protestant Charter Schools of this kingdom having met, according to order, and examined several witnesses on the subject matter of the said inquiry, have directed me to report as follows :

“ Your Committee read and examined an Abstract of His Majesty's Royal Charter for erecting and promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland, which they think proper to state, and is as follows :

“ George the Second, by the grace of God,
“ of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King,
“ Defender of the Faith, &c. to all persons to
“ whom these presents shall come. Forasmuch
“ as we have received information by the Petition
“ of the Lord Primate, Lord Chancellor, Arch-
“ bishops, Noblemen, Bishops, Judges, Gentry
“ and Clergy of our Kingdom of Ireland, that
“ in many parts of the said kingdom there are

“ great tracts of land almost entirely inhabited
 “ *by Papists*, who are kept by their clergy in
 “ great ignorance of the true religion, and bred
 “ up in great dissatisfaction to the Government:
 “ that the erecting of English Protestant Schools
 “ in those places is absolutely necessary for *their*
 “ *conversion*: that the English Parish Schools
 “ already established are not sufficient for that
 “ purpose: nor can the residence of the paro-
 “ chial clergy only, fully answer that end:
 “ *To the intent, therefore, that the children of*
 “ *the Popish*, and other poor natives of the said
 “ kingdom, may be instructed in the English
 “ tongue, and the principles of true religion and
 “ loyalty; and that so good a design may the
 “ more effectually be carried on, the Lord-Lieute-
 “ nant, and some of the chief nobility, gentry,
 “ and clergy, of the said kingdom, are appointed
 “ Commissioners *to execute the purposes of this*
 “ *charter**, and have a power to elect others in
 “ the room of their deceased members; and
 “ are constituted a Corporation, or Body Politic,
 “ by the name of ‘ The Incorporated Society
 “ in Dublin for promoting English Protestant

* Here we have the original intent and purpose of the charter, for the execution of which alone, was the Society incorporated.—It is a fair subject for parliamentary inquiry, how far these purposes have been executed, or abandoned and frustrated.

“ Schools in Ireland,’ and are capable to receive
“ and enjoy, in fee and in perpetuity, any
“ manors, lands, tenements, &c. the same not
“ exceeding the value of £2000 per annum;
“ and any sum or sums of money that shall be
“ given them by any person or persons, bodies
“ politic and corporate, &c. to be applied for
“ the establishing and supporting English Pro-
“ testant Schools, in such places of the kingdom
“ as they shall think proper.

“ The said Society is empowered to nominate
“ and appoint schoolmasters and schoolmistresses,
“ to be approved and licensed by the archbishops
“ and bishops respectively, to continue during the
“ pleasure of the said Society; who are to be
“ supported by the Society, and provided with
“ all things necessary for the instruction of the
“ poor children in the principles of the Pro-
“ testant religion, reading, writing, and arithmetic,
“ as likewise with proper books, and all neces-
“ sary materials fit for teaching them husbandry,
“ housewifery, trades, manufactures, &c. in order
“ to bring them up to virtue, labour, and
“ industry.

“ The Society is likewise empowered to nomi-
“ nate persons to receive subscriptions, benefac-
“ tions, &c., in any part of His Majesty’s domi-
“ nions, from all well-disposed persons. The So-
“ ciety may elect and admit Subscribers (being

“ Protestants) to be members, to assist in carry-
 “ ing on the design aforesaid.”

“ Your Committee observe, that the business of
 the Incorporated Society is usually transacted by
 the Committee of Fifteen, at the Society’s House
 in Suffolk-street*.

“ Your Committee thought it their duty to
 examine John Howard, Esq., whose evidence is
 in his words :

“ In two of my former journeys in Ireland,
 “ I looked into some of the Protestant Charter
 “ Schools, carrying with me the account of
 “ them published at the end of the sermons
 “ that had been preached to the Society. I
 “ afterwards waited on the Committee of Fifteen,
 “ in Dublin, and having reported various appa-
 “ rent abuses, an alteration was made in some
 “ particulars: but I am fully persuaded that
 “ this noble charity demands still a thorough
 “ reformation, and a parliamentary inquiry for
 “ that purpose.

“ Some general observations on these schools
 “ and nurseries were given in my Publication in
 “ 1784; but having visited them in 1787, I
 “ shall now give a particular account of them.”

* Now Aungier Street, opposite York Street.

“ DUBLIN.

“ MILLTOWN ROAD NURSERY, June 6th, 1787.

“ HERE were thirty-three children, many of them unhealthy. No diet table nor rules hung up. I observed an *excessive parsimony* in linen, soap, and other things necessary for cleanliness and health.”

“ COUNTY OF DUBLIN.

“ CLONTARF-STRAND SCHOOL, June 7th, 1787.

“ FIFTY-THREE boys, many employed in spinning; several had cutaneous disorders on their hands; but the old master having been discharged, they in general looked better than at my former visits. Allowance for diet for each boy is three-pence a day; and the master pays a halfpenny a day for the work of each boy. Linen scanty. Children shifted only once a week. Salary to master and mistress, £24 Irish; for three maid servants, £30.”

“ SANTRY SCHOOL, June 7th, 1787.

“ FORTY-TWO girls. The house not white-washed, nor in repair. The children healthy;

and this still seems to me one of the best of the schools. Employment, spinning. Children shifted once a week. Half-year's allowance for soap and candles, £4. 1s. Salary to master and mistress, £12, and they pay for the work of three-fourths of the children, 20s. a year each; and to the Society for thirty-three acres of land, £37. 4s.

“ KILKENNY SCHOOL.

“ June 9th, 1787.

“ THIRTY-THREE boys. Much cleaner than at my former visits. Rules and orders hung up. In the infirmary no beds. Salary to the master, £6, and mistress, £6. The servants' wages and diet, only £5. They pay 15s. a year for the work of each child, but complain of losing by such a charge: annual allowance for the clothing of each, £1. 5s. Here is an usher.”

“ COUNTY OF WATERFORD.

“ KILLOTTERAN SCHOOL, June 10th, 1787.

“ FIFTY-TWO boys. The house and rooms perfectly clean; as also the children, though many

in rags*. Employment, spinning cotton and linen. The master and mistress have also complained of losing by the work, for which they pay as at Kilkenny School. No usher. The mistress and her daughters were teaching the little children to read. Salary to the master and mistress, £6 each. Premium, £8; for in this and other Schools premiums are sometimes given. Allowance, only £20 a year for fuel, soap, and candles; and £3. 2s. 6d. for the diet of each child.

“ The Society for some years, because the price of oatmeal exceeded 8s. an hundred, made a small addition to the allowance of this and other schools; but at a Quarterly General Meeting on Wednesday, August 3d, 1785, it was resolved that no such allowance should be continued†.”

* “ It seems that the influence of cleanliness is extensive; for the cabins within a few miles of this house were the cleanest and neatest I ever saw in all my tours in Ireland.”

† “ This Resolution was sent to the masters of all the Charter Schools:

“ Resolved, that it be, and is hereby recommended to the
 “ General Board to direct, that in future no additional ex-
 “ pense shall be allowed to the masters or mistresses of any
 “ of the Charter Schools, or Nurseries, for any supposed
 “ advanced price upon the provisions laid in by them over and
 “ above the *contract* price or allowances.

“ Ordered, that the said Resolution be, and the same is
 “ hereby confirmed, and that the masters and mistresses be
 “ informed that the Society expect that they will in future

“ COUNTY OF TIPPERARY.

“ CLONMEL SCHOOL, June 12th, 1787.

“ TWENTY-NINE boys. House dirty. Wants beds and bedding. In the infirmary only two bedsteads, and a little dirty straw and lumber. Pantry empty. Children *half starved, and almost naked*. Usher no allowance. The master said he paid one, as he was too old to teach. Allowance for soap and candles, only £5. On application to the Local Committee for allowance for necessaries, the answer is, *the Society is poor, they cannot afford it*. By the book it appears that there has been no Report since June 1st, 1785.”

“ feed the children with good and wholesome food, in quantity
“ and quality agreeably to the Society’s established dietary,
“ without making any demand, as heretofore, for any advance
“ price upon the provisions *above the contract allowance**; and
“ that if any master or mistress will not abide by this deter-
“ mination, such are directed to give notice to the Secretary,
“ and the Society will immediately send down masters and
“ mistresses to succeed them.

“ Signed by Order,

“ THO. GIBBONS, Sec.”

“ The Diet Table was fixed at an Annual General Meeting of the Incorporated Society, held on Wednesday the 1st of November, 1769.”

* Here is full evidence of the masters being allowed to contract for the feeding of the children. How improper! as opening a door to short allowances, and food of bad quality.

" COUNTY OF CORK.

" INNISCARA SCHOOL, June 18th, 1787.

" TWENTY-SIX girls; fifteen boys. The house out of repair, *very dirty, and full of fleas*; many dogs, some on the beds. The infirmary is the fuel-house, and has no door. Dairy empty, the children dirty; *seem* half-starved*; and many had the itch and other cutaneous disorders. Here, and in several other schools, the master's children are clean, fresh, and healthy. Linen wanted. Application for sheets two years since, but none sent. Dr. Austin in one of his Reports says, "The pot-
" tage is very thin and indifferent." In another, "The meat scanty, not exceeding three ounces to
" each child," (though, being Sunday, it should, according to the diet table, have been ten ounces). It seems from the book, that none of the Local Committee have visited this house since August 1785."

* "At my visit after three o'clock, the children had received no dinner, nor were there any preparations for it till after my inquiries."

" CHARLEVILLE SCHOOL, June 20th, 1787.

" TWENTY-SIX girls; one boy. The mistress lately appointed*. The children neat and clean. Allowance for soap and candles, £5 a year; fuel, £10. No servant. Rent for the Society's land raised from Michaelmas, 1786, from £8 to £15. Salary to mistress, £12.

" NEWPORT SCHOOL, June 23d, 1787.

" FORTY girls and two boys. Several of the schools are now entire for each sex separately, in which formerly boys and girls were mixed. The house not dirty, the children neat. Annual allowance for soap and candles, only £4; for glazing windows, 5s.; sheeting wanted. In October, 1785, twenty pair reported, only ten sent. In this, and

* " The mistress was appointed in consequence of this Report of the Local Committee:

" December 6th, 1786.

" Whatever occasion of complaint we have had for some years past relative to the said School, has been solely owing to the master, who had fallen into a habit of drinking, of which our remonstrance could not break him, of which we before took notice to the Society in some of our Reports. The situation of the mistress is very much distressed; and as the School is now to consist of girls, a tenderness for her in her present situation induces us to recommend her."

several other schools, are complaints, that there is no allowance for new spinning wheels, or repairing old ones. One of the boys is an idiot, lame and blind*. I need not repeat the allowance for the diet and clothing of the children, and the pay for their work, *as they are the same in almost all the schools.*"

" KING'S COUNTY.

" FRANCKFORT SCHOOL, June 23d, 1787.

" FORTY-SIX girls; four boys. The house, school-room, and store-room, *very offensive*. Fowls, ducks, and pigs, in the kitchen. Children dirty and sickly. The mistress old and infirm. All things out of order. The boys lay in the room called the infirmary, in which were turkeys and fowls; and it seemed not to have been cleaned for six months. Linen much wanted. Allowance for soap and candles, only £4; fuel, £8; mistress, £12; usher, £6; maid-servant, £5. Meat was roasting for the mistress's dinner at five in the afternoon.

* " In this School I saw a Report of Mr. Archdeacon Wight.

" September 16th, 1781.

" Their beds scandalously dirty, the bed-clothes ruinous, torn, and filthy, and the children seem much neglected:" and afterwards he adds; " I made a Report some time ago to the Committee of Fifteen much to the same purpose of this, and now find no great alteration for the better."

Such late hours kept by the master and mistress in the evening, must produce late morning hours to the children."

" LEINSTER NURSERY, at MONASTEREVAN, June 25th, 1787.

" SEVENTY-EIGHT children. Here, as in Milltown Nursery, are both boys and girls, from two to six years of age. The bed-rooms and stairs not clean. Bedding bad. Sheets here, as at all the schools, brown linen, which never seems clean. Allowance to master and mistress, £10 each; soap and candles, £12; fuel, £14. Diet, formerly $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ a day each child: now $2\frac{1}{4}d^*$. Master's dinner time five

* " Here had lately been received from the Society the following letter:

" At a General Meeting of the Incorporated Society, &c. held on Wednesday the 30th of May, 1787, His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Cashel in the chair:

" Resolved, That it appears to this Board that the present allowance to the children in the three provincial Nurseries is insufficient, and that it is necessary to increase the said allowance to $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ per day, to commence from the 25th of March last.

" By Order,

" For Mr. THOMAS GIBBONS, Secretary,

" GEO. GORDON."

" No master or mistress of any of the afore-mentioned Schools had, at the time of my visits, received any account of the increased allowance for the children's diet."

o'clock, as at the school last mentioned. He pretends to be an apothecary, and was lately paid six guineas for medicines. This appeared to me improper, and my opinion was confirmed by the number of children that lately died."

"COUNTY OF ROSCOMMON.

"ATHLONE RANELAGH SCHOOL,

"AT both the Ranelagh schools there are only the children of *Protestants*: of this an affidavit must be made by their parents, or nearest relations, before a magistrate. July 8th, 1787, here were forty boys. *The rooms full of fleas.* The boys dirty; no towels; no water; no vault. Here, and at the other schools which I visited, the salutary practice of lime-whiting is not adopted, nor can any of the upper sashes be let down. Allowance to the usher, £7, and a child's maintenance. Two maid-servants, £5 each; soap and candles, £7; fuel, £10. Clothing here, £1. 19s. 3d. each. Allowance for diet, £3. 2s. 6d.* and the deduction

* "In the Local Committee's book are these words:

"At a meeting, 21st of January, 1767, thirteen gentlemen present. Having seen a dietary given to the school-master by Mr. Lloyd, signed by Order, Thomas Gibbons, his Excellency John Ponsonby in the chair: It is the opinion of this Committee, that the allowance of

for the work of three-fourths of the children, as in the other schools: though by a letter of the 9th of May, 1787, the Society mentions, “ that the present income of the Ranelagh fund does considerably exceed the annual expenses.”

“ ROSCOMMON RANELAGH SCHOOL, July 8th, 1787.

“ FORTY girls. In this school, and the other Ranelagh school, the situation of the children is changed, the girls being now where there is much ploughed land, and the boys where there is none. The house is clean. The girls neat. Allowance for soap and candles, only £6 a year. No towels. A new infirmary is left unfinished. A contract was made for new sashes for the house, and for building the infirmary, and the carpenter began the work the 4th of October, 1786, by order of the Com-

“ meal set forth in the dietary is too small, and that not
 “ less than one pound and a half of meal is sufficient for
 “ the support of the children each day, having seen one pound
 “ of meal weighed and baked; and not less than one quart of
 “ new-milk, or three pints of skimmed-milk or butter-milk, will
 “ be sufficient for each boy or girl.

“ Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Committee that
 “ the children be put on the allowance of one pound and
 “ a half of meal to each, until the Resolution of the Committee of Fifteen be farther known.”

“ This was not confirmed by the Committee of Fifteen.”

mittee of Fifteen; *but not having received any part* of the payment, he was arrested and put into prison for £11. 10s. 2d., and the work was at a stand*.”

“ LONGFORD SCHOOL.

“ July 9th, 1787.

“ FORTY-ONE boys. The house ruinous; the walls very dirty†. Linen much wanting. The

* “ The Reports of the Local Committees are as follow :

“ 19th of May, 1787.

“ Resolved, That it is our opinion that the sum of £20 ought to be ordered, to enable the undertaker to pursue the said work, he not having been paid any money hitherto for the said sashes and said infirmary.”

“ 29th of June, 1787.

“ Resolved, That the Resolution of this Committee of the 19th of May, recommending £20 to be paid to the undertaker of the new sashes for the school-house, and rebuilding the infirmary, not having been attended to, was the occasion of the said undertaker's being arrested, and actually lodged in gaol: and this Committee strongly recommend that the said sum of £20, and a further sum of £15, be ordered to the master, to be by him paid over to the said undertaker, he having done work equivalent to that amount, viz. the sashes made up, and the infirmary wall built.”

† “ The Report of the Local Committee :

24th of June, 1785.

“ We recommend to the Society, that the whole inside of the

kitchen and infirmary often overflowed in winter. The master allows for the children's work, but says he has nothing for them to do*. Twelve boys lately came hither from Castlearberry School, *half starved and almost naked*; one of them an idiot."

" COUNTY OF DERRY."

" BALLYKELLY SCHOOL, July 16, 1787.

" TWENTY-EIGHT boys; seven girls. Bedding much wanted. No coverlids. The Committee of Fifteen now clothe the children of all the schools. Here I first saw the clothing: for boys, brown cloth coat and waistcoat, with yellow trimming, two pair of linen breeches, two shirts, three pair of stockings, three pair of shoes: for girls, cloth jacket and petticoat, two shifts, two aprons, two caps, two pair of stockings, two pair of pumps,

" house be whitewashed, as being both necessary and healthful;

" and that the ceiling of the two rooms where the children lie

" be repaired, being very much out of order."

" No attention has been paid to this Report."

* " In a Report of the Local Committee are these words:

" We find the children in general too small to make their labour of any value, a stop having been put to the old work of the boys spinning, as it was found prejudicial to their health. 30th of May, 1787."

but no hats nor handkerchiefs*. Allowance for soap and candles, £4. 10s. Fuel, £6. Here the rent of the land has been raised. On the 29th of June, 1787, the master received an account of the increased allowance and alteration mentioned in the dietary†.”

“ COUNTY OF DONEGAL.

“ RAY SCHOOL, July 17, 1787.

“ TWENTY-ONE boys; thirteen girls. Kitchen small and dirty; only seven beds for boys, and seven for girls. The children here, as in many other places, without shoes and stockings; tolerably healthy. A letter, similar to that below,

* “ Report at a meeting of the Local Committee:

“ June 29th, 1787.

“ The clothes that have been sent down are of a very bad
“ quality, and made quite too small, particularly the waistcoats
“ for the large boys don’t cover *half* the children’s bellies, and
“ of course will not wear half the time they otherwise would.”

† “ Copy of the letter received by Mr. Archibald Campbell, master of the Ballykelly School, 29th of June, 1797.

“ At a General Meeting of the Incorporated Society, &c.
“ held on Wednesday, the 16th of May, 1787, the Right
“ Reverend the Lord Bishop of Raphoe in the chair:

“ Schools in general.

“ Resolved, That the allowance to the masters for feeding
“ the several persons in the Charter Schools be increased to

respecting the alteration in the dietary, was received here the 1st of July.

“ The advance of the rent of the Society’s

“ two-pence half-penny per day for each person; said increased
“ allowance to commence from the 25th of March last.”

“ At a General Meeting of the Incorporated Society, &c.
“ held on Wednesday, the 30th of May, 1787, his Grace the
“ Lord Archbishop of Cashel in the chair:

“ Dietary.

“ The Society, pursuant to the Committee of Fifteen’s reso-
“ lution of the 23d instant, referred to them this day, took into
“ consideration the Report of the Select Committee appointed
“ to consider of the state of the dietary of children in the
“ Charter Schools, the same being now read and maturely con-
“ sidered,

“ Resolved, That the first paragraph in the present dietary
“ be amended as follows; viz. That one pound and a quarter
“ of oatmeal, or one and a quarter of wheat meal, or an equiva-
“ lent of potatoes, being four pounds and a half, with one quart
“ and half a pint of milk, or beer, each day, are judged sufficient
“ for the children, one with another: to this must be added ten
“ ounces of flesh meat on each Sunday, and as much on some
“ other day of the week, to be fixed by the Local Committee,
“ when meat does not exceed two-pence by the pound; and
“ when it exceeds that price, on Sundays only; and on suc-
“ ceeding days, broth thickened with oatmeal and wholesome
“ vegetables shredded small.

“ Resolved, That the second paragraph of the dietary be
“ amended by striking out the following words: Or an equal
“ quantity of new milk and water.

“ By Order, for Mr. THOMAS GIBBONS, Secretary,

“ GEO. GORDON.”

land occasions a general discontent. On this subject I shall copy, in a note, the Report of the Local Committee, and that of the Committee of Fifteen*.”

* “ At a meeting of the Local Committee of the Charter School at Ray, the 1st of February, 1786, being duly and timely warned by the master for that purpose, we are of opinion that the value of land here is a guinea per acre.

[Signed by four clergymen.]

“ At a meeting of the Local Committee, 25th of July, 1786, being duly and timely warned by the master for that purpose,” (three gentlemen, Mr. Rea, Mr. Boyd, Mr. M‘Castan.) “ Though, upon the last Report of the Local Committee, lands in this neighbourhood were valued at a guinea per acre, yet, upon inspecting the school lands very minutely, we do not apprehend they are worth to a farmer more than fifteen shillings per acre; and we are of opinion the master ought to have them cheaper.”

“ At a meeting, &c. 27th of September, 1786, being duly and timely warned:

“ We request the Committee will order the children yearly clothing as soon as possible, as they are in great need of them. We think that the intention of the Committee to raise the master’s rent to sixteen pounds yearly is oppressive, and more than he can pay: however, he is willing to submit the rent to the determination of two farmers, who shall on oath declare what the land is worth. We enclose the doctor’s bill, which we request may for this time be paid: should the Committee think his charges too high, they may discontinue him.”

“ July 6th, 1787.

“ Being duly and timely warned, [Signed by four clergy-

“ COUNTY OF LOUTH.

“ DUNDALK SCHOOL, July 21, 1787.

“ FORTY girls. The house clean, but the children seemed by their countenances to be scantily fed. Pantry empty. Allowance now two-pence halfpenny a day. Linen wanted; no towels; no tablecloths; only one sheet on a bed. Here, and at a few other schools, there is no land.”

“ men and one gentleman.] We think that the Charter School farm, which we have this day carefully examined, is too dear at sixteen shillings per acre, nor ought it to be set for more than twelve shillings to the master of the school, as he cannot make any permanent improvements on it, on account of the uncertainty of his term.”

The land was raised from six pounds to sixteen pounds.

“ At a Committee of Fifteen of the Incorporated Society, &c. held on Wednesday, the 11th of October, 1786, James Ford, Esq. in the chair :

“ Ray School Report of the 27th :

“ That the master be informed, this Committee consider their order of the 26th of April last, for raising the rent of the lands, by no means oppressive, and therefore cannot recede therefrom.

“ By Order,

“ THOMAS GIBBONS.”

“ COUNTY OF DOWN.

“ STRANGFORD SCHOOL, July 23, 1787.

“ TWENTY boys. Children healthy. Here they have the advantage of frequently bathing in the sea. Salary to master and mistress, £12; maid servant, £5; soap* and candles, £5; coal, £14. *The infirmary is used as a stable.*

“ To these remarks on the Charter Schools which I visited, it will not be improper to add the following hints for their improvement:

“ The allowance for the children’s diet should not be less than three-pence a day each. In the diet table, the quantity and quality should be fixed for every day in the week. The master and mistress should dine within half an hour of the children’s time, that the business of the house be not interrupted, and late hours introduced among the children. The regulations for masters, children, and servants, should be painted on a board, and hung up; and the bell rung at the times of rising, prayers, meals, &c.

“ To every fifteen children there should be one

* “ I have, in these remarks, seldom omitted to mention the allowance for soap; because when too small, as it often is in these schools, it is an inducement to preserve the urine for washing the children’s linen, which is one cause of cutaneous disorders.”

maid-servant; and in large schools there should be a cook, who is also to manage the dairy. The whole of Saturday should be appropriated to cleanliness. There should be a larger allowance for soap, starch, candles, and fuel, and proper utensils for cleaning the rooms. The children constantly shifted twice a week. A crib-bedstead for every two children at most, and single beds for the sick children. In the master's or mistress's bed-room a window to look into the children's dormitory. An infirmary in every house, with beds and proper bedding, kept neat. Every house once a year to be lime-whited, that is, washed with boiling water in which stone-lime has been slaked. The sashes of the windows, both upper and under, should be moveable. A dairy and pantry in every house. A pump is necessary. A convenient bath. A proper vault, with separations. The master to keep only one dog. No pigs nor fowls ever to enter the house. The master and mistress to accompany the children to and from church, and sit with them there. The time for the children's work not to exceed four hours a day, and the masters and mistresses not to be charged for it. Large and neat gardens for a supply of vegetables, and work for the boys. The girls to be employed in spinning and knitting, in making and mending their linen,

and in assisting in all kind of household work. Masters and mistresses to be prohibited from selling milk, butter, and cheese*.

“As the Society's lands are out of condition, every master's expense in improving them with lime, marle, &c. should be fully reimbursed by the Local Committee, in case of his dismissal, or death.

“The Protestant gentlemen within ten miles of a school should be earnestly requested to be of the Local Committee, and to make frequent visits to it. The ladies, within the same distance, should also be desired to favour the schools with their visits, and make their remarks in a book kept for that purpose.

“The Local Committee should be permitted to give stipulated premiums to the most cleanly, orderly, and diligent children, and those who make the best improvements.

“The Committee of Fifteen should pay the greatest attention to the remarks of the Local Committee.

“Some of these remarks were made in my former edition; but being more fully convinced of their importance, they are now repeated. The alterations proposed may be thought too expensive; but I am persuaded, that the penu-

* It is worthy of inquiry how far these benevolent recommendations were carried into effect.

riousness of the Society in providing diet, clothing, &c., which has been long observed by those who visit the children, or see them at church, has considerably reduced the subscriptions; but these improvements would probably recover and increase them; they would retrieve the credit of the Society, *and do honour to the Protestant cause.*

“ I cannot forbear here expressing a wish that the benefits of education were more generally extended over Ireland than they are by these schools. If free schools were instituted in every parish for instructing in the lower parts of learning, and the principles of morality, children of each sex, and of all persuasions, it would, perhaps more than any thing, tend to soften the manners of the Irish poor, by enabling their youth to resist the various temptations to vice, to which they are inevitably exposed in their crowded huts and cabins. In Scotland, almost every village has its settled schoolmaster, and the beneficial effects of it are evident; for it is principally owing to this, that the numerous emigrants from that country, dispersed over almost all Europe, appear with credit, and advance themselves in their several stations. The Sunday Schools, lately established by the benevolence of the public in so many parts of England, will doubtless, in some degree, produce similar good effects. But no plan that I have

seen for the extended instruction of the poor seems more judiciously calculated for the purpose than one lately instituted by the Trustees of the Bluecoat Hospital in the City of Chester; where, to an ancient establishment of an hospital for poor children, a charity for the education of a large number of out-scholars has been annexed, and has been productive of the happiest effects. I will, therefore, here describe the following particular account of it.

“ Of late years the whole income of this charity
“ has been expended in the maintenance and
“ education of thirty boys, whom we now call
“ in-scholars. The annual expense of each in-
“ scholar has been about £13: and the education
“ of each boy for four years has cost £52. Such
“ large charitable benefactions being bestowed on
“ a few, a much larger number of boys, equally
“ destitute, have been suffered to grow up to men,
“ unemployed and uninstructed.

“ In 1781, when the income of the hospital was
“ augmented, it was proposed to educate sixty more
“ boys as out-scholars, to be taught reading, writ-
“ ing, and some arithmetic; but not to be clothed,
“ maintained, or lodged, in the house. This pro-
“ posal was not accomplished till the autumn of
“ 1783. The improvement of the sixty new scho-
“ lars in reading, writing, and behaviour, was so
“ remarkable, and so pleasing, that in December,
“ 1784, a proposal was made to double the num-
“ ber, which was unanimously approved by a full

“ and respectable meeting of the trustees. Two
 “ masters now teach one hundred and twenty out-
 “ scholars. The salary of the first master is £40,
 “ and the second, £25 a year. Hence, the expense
 “ of each out-scholar is 10s. 10*d.* a year to the
 “ master. The annual expense of each boy in
 “ books is 1s. 3½*d.*, and in coal, 4½*d.* A green cap,
 “ which costs 1s. 6*d.*, is given to each scholar every
 “ year. Hence it appears that the whole annual
 “ expense of each out-scholar is 14s., consequently
 “ more money is bestowed on one in-scholar than
 “ would educate eighteen out-scholars.

“ A good education is now given to thirty in-
 “ scholars, and one hundred and twenty out-
 “ scholars, which comprehend above one-third of
 “ all the boys in Chester. The boys are appointed
 “ scholars about nine years old, in order to have
 “ their instruction completed about the age of going
 “ apprentice. When the out-scholars are of two
 “ years standing, fifteen of the best are annually
 “ elected in-scholars for two years; and the boys
 “ not thus elected, remain two years in the out-
 “ school.

“ It is an interesting truth, which deserves public
 “ attention, that two masters can teach one hundred
 “ and twenty scholars. At the examination of last
 “ April, all the boys who had been two years in
 “ the school, though several did not know a letter
 “ at their admission, could read and write very
 “ well, understood some arithmetic, and had very

“ perfectly learned their catechism*.”—Report of the State of the Bluecoat Hospital in Chester, May 1st, 1787.

“ Mr. Howard further informed your Committee, that the first country school he visited was Kilkenny, in the year 1782. He went with a sermon in his hand, preached by the Bishop of Raphoe, published in the year 1781. He desired to see the boys; they produced thirty-four to him: the sermon mentioned that the school contained sixty boys. He inquired whether any had been lately sent out? The answer was, that for several years the school had not exceeded that number. He afterwards visited several other schools in the same year, viz. Ardbrackan, Castledermot, Dundalk,

* “ I here copy one of the considerations on the Chester School, as coinciding with my own sentiments:

“ A strange and pernicious prejudice has too generally prevailed against educating the children of the poor, so as to check the beneficence of the charitable and humane. Some have absurdly maintained, that the most ignorant are the most virtuous, happy, and useful part of mankind. It is astonishing what injurious influence this doctrine has had, though so contrary to common sense and common observation. Let any one recollect the character of bricklayers, joiners, shoemakers, and other mechanics, as well as of domestic servants, and he will certainly discover, that the most honest, sober, industrious, and useful, both to their own families and the public, are those who have been accustomed to attend divine service, and who were instructed, when young, in moral principles, reading, writing, and accounts.”

Maynooth, Stradbally, Trim, Waterford, Cashel, Clontarf, Santry, and the nurseries of Milltown and Monasterevan. He afterwards waited on the Committee of Fifteen, and very freely spoke his mind to those gentlemen as to the numbers and management of those schools. In the publication of the year 1783, he had the pleasure to find the gentlemen had given an additional column for the number then actually in each school, and also the number that each school will contain.

“ In the beginning of the year 1784, Mr. Howard published his ‘ State of Prisons in England and Wales,’ &c., an extract from which he read, in the following words, viz.

“ Having taken notice of several of the Orphan Schools abroad, I cannot help adding an account of some particulars relating to the Protestant Charter Schools.

“ Their number is forty-one, besides four nurseries to supply them with children. *In visiting them, I carried with me a sermon preached before the Incorporated Society, (to which is added an account of the several Schools,) published in 1781, at the request of the Society. In the two schools near Dublin, that at Clontarfstrand for boys, and at Santry for girls, I was greatly surprised to find but forty-six in the former, and thirty-four in the latter, though the numbers given in the published account were one hundred boys and forty girls. At Kilkenny*

“ *and Castledermot, the deficient numbers were*
“ *twenty-six in the former, and seventeen in the*
“ *latter; and there was a like deficiency in some*
“ *of the other schools.* These schools are managed
“ by a Committee of Fifteen, who meet every week
“ in Dublin*. This Committee has lately dis-
“ covered a consciousness of their error in publish-
“ ing such *false accounts, and suffering them to*
“ *be delivered from the pulpit; for in the last*
“ *ephemeris, the true numbers seem to be given,*
“ *and they amount to about seven hundred (or*
“ *near a third) less than the numbers which had*
“ *been before stated.*

“ The masters of these schools hold a certain
“ quantity of land belonging to the Society, for
“ which they pay no higher rent than was paid
“ when the ground was originally granted. Every
“ master is allowed a salary of £12 Irish, and
“ contracts for the clothing, diet, and work of
“ the children. These contracts are so low, (viz.
“ annual clothing, £1. 5s. Irish; diet, £3. 2s. 6d.)
“ that the state of most of the schools which I
“ visited was so deplorable, *as to disgrace Pro-*
“ *testantism, and to encourage Popery in Ireland,*
“ *rather than the contrary.*

“ If the Committee finds a decrease in their
“ funds, a less number of Schools, with proper

* “ There is besides a Local Committee for superintending each school.”

“ attention, will do the Society much more credit
 “ than a large number of such *sickly, naked, and*
 “ *half-starved children as I found in them.* In
 “ short, these schools demand a thorough parlia-
 “ mentary reform.

“ May I be allowed to hint, that there should be
 “ one plain decent uniform for all the children;
 “ distinct schools for each sex; clean linen twice a
 “ week; a convenient bath; a larger allowance to
 “ the masters* for diet, and for washing, fire and
 “ candles. A crib bedstead for each child. Rooms
 “ appropriated to the sick, and an apothecary for
 “ each house. Distinct school-rooms, work-rooms,
 “ and dining-rooms, and an area enclosed for play.
 “ A dairy and pantry. The master’s and mistress’s
 “ bed-room situated so as to look into the children’s
 “ dormitory. The provincial nurseries abolished,
 “ and that at Dublin put on a larger plan, (since,
 “ if proper attention were paid to the children, the
 “ admission of a child would be a matter of favour

* “ In the account of the Highland Schools in Scotland,
 p. 26, it is said:

“ The insufficiency of the schoolmasters’ salaries has been
 “ found to be one great source of irregularities: for this
 “ reason, and considering the advanced price of provisions
 “ in every part of the country, as well as the importance of
 “ placing their schoolmasters in a situation above want, the
 “ Society anxiously wish that every schoolmaster in their
 “ service shall have his salary increased.”

“ and entreaty*). That a check should be kept
“ on the Local Committees by the occasional
“ inspection of one of the Committee of Fifteen,
“ whose travelling expenses might be paid by the
“ Society. That the rules and orders for every
“ department should be conspicuously hung up.
“ That premiums, and every encouragement,
“ should be given to the most cleanly and
“ diligent children, and the houses lime-whited
“ once a year.

“ I beg leave further to suggest, that it seems
“ highly desirable that these schools should be in
“ the vicinity of large towns; both for a more easy
“ supply of provisions, medical assistance, &c. and
“ more particularly for the convenience of frequent
“ visits from the Local Committees, without whose
“ unremitting attention to enforce the prescribed
“ rules, all the endeavours of the gentlemen in
“ Dublin will be absolutely fruitless. I have gene-
“ rally found, that in schools so situated, more
“ attention has been paid to the children by the

* “ I was not at the nursery at Monivae in Connaught, but I saw several children lately sent from thence, who were *distempered, half-naked objects*. I was further confirmed in my opinion of the inutility of the provincial nurseries, on being informed, that at one of the best schools, near Waterford (which had its full number of boys,) there was no difficulty in replenishing it from the neighbourhood, since parents frequently requested to have their children taken in.”

“ persons concerned in their education, than in
“ those at some miles’ distance.”

“ The Bishop of Raphoe’s sermon was preached
the 1st of November, 1780, and published in 1781,
wherein he says, that there were upwards of two
thousand two hundred children educated in those
schools: and Mr. Howard read an extract from
that sermon in the following words: “ Let the
“ benevolent patriot and Christian hear, that in
“ these schools above two thousand two hundred
“ children, who otherwise must have become pests
“ of society, and augmented the list of souls
“ doomed to destruction, are annually maintained,
“ &c.” *where the number, Mr. Howard says,
appears to be seven hundred, or near a third less
than as stated in the sermon.* Mr. Howard thinks
if the schools were put on a proper footing, it would
become a matter of favour to get in, and the pro-
vincial nurseries would become unnecessary. He
has taken a view of several of the prisons and hos-
pitals in this country the last year, and also of the
following Charter Schools, viz. Clontarf, Santry,
Kilkenny, Waterford, Clonmel, Inniscarra, Charle-
ville, Newport, Frankford, Athlone, Roscommon,
Longford, Ballykelly, Dundalk, Ray, Strangford,
and the nurseries of Milltown and Monasterevan.
Mr. Howard here read an extract from a manu-
script, which he means to publish in a few months,
and which is hereafter subjoined.

“ Mr. Howard said, if any gentleman wishes to

have a more minute account of the schools, he will, from his memorandums taken on the spot, give a more particular account of them : says many of the schools are much out of repair and going to ruin, and the children are *neither well clothed, well fed, nor well taught*. Some of the children that were at Santry, who had been brought from Ballycastle School, and had been there for six years, could not read. *The dreadful situation of the Schools prevents their being filled; their reading is neglected, for the purpose of making the children work for the master. The children in general were sickly, pale, and such miserable objects, that they were a disgrace to all society.* The masters and mistresses in general complained of the scanty allowances in every respect, and he has not met with any one school that came up to his idea of a well-regulated school, and thinks even the present allowance for diet of $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per diem is insufficient. The reason the children are so backward in their learning is, that they have no time for it, they being employed to work for the masters ; and in his opinion there should be no charge for the children's work, as spinning is an useless and unhealthy employment for the boys : he would have three-fourths of the nurseries put down, and would retain only one, suppose that at Monasterevan : he dislikes nurseries in general, as nurseries are a superfluous expense. Mr. Howard mentions the school at Waterford, which never wants supplies from the

nurseries, the care and attention of a notable mistress making it a matter of favour to get into that school, and which he found, at both his visits, had its full complement of children.

“ In general, the Local Committees complain, (and Mr. Howard is persuaded they have good reason,) that sufficient attention is not given to their representations by the Committee of Fifteen.

“ At the well-regulated school at Chester, the annual expense of an intern, at an average, is about £13; but this is in a populous city, and they are full grown boys.

“ The officers' salaries are here increased to double what they were formerly. And Mr. Howard says, that some of the county hospitals are almost in as bad a state as the Charter Schools. Mr. Howard thinks it would be proper that the parents of externs should pay a small stipend. Mr. Howard says, that in Chester the interns and externs have different masters; and he thinks there should be a total separation between them, and they should have different masters. He has seen children pass upon a Sunday, and not more than half the school has been going to church, for want of proper clothing, in one place particularly; and that they were objects of derision from being so weak and puny, and thinks they ought to make such an appearance as to be a credit to the Protestant religion. [Here Mr. Howard offered to turn to the particular

school he alluded to, but your Committee thought it was not necessary.] He would wish to have the day schools separate, because the morals of the interns may be affected by mixing with a great number of the externs. Mr. Howard thinks no masters of interns can give a proper attention to externs unless they are separated : says, that in his visits of the Charter Schools, he could form some opinion of the care taken of children in schools which he had not visited, on account of the removal of children from some of the schools to others, in pursuance of a scheme of dividing the boys from the girls into distinct schools.

[*Mr. HOWARD's Extract.*]

“ IN my visits, in the year 1787, I had this advantage ; by the late alterations and removals of the children, I could partly judge of the management of some schools that I had not visited.

“ At Longford were *twelve sickly and almost naked boys*, lately sent from Castlecarberry : at Clonmel *thirteen miserable objects* were sent here, the 11th of November, from Castlebar. So at Kilkenny and Newport Schools the masters separated their former children from those lately sent in, to shew me the *sad condition* of the latter.

“ The pumps in most of the schools were quite out of order, and a long time useless. The water

“ they brought from the ditches, as at Long-
 “ ford, &c.

“ The necessaries in almost all the schools were
 “ ruinous sheds without seats, and very filthy
 “ places.

“ *At Inniscarra School, the master said that the*
 “ *Committee had applied for sheets about two*
 “ *years past, but none were sent: also in other*
 “ *schools application was often made to the Com-*
 “ *mittee of Fifteen for necessaries wanted, but no*
 “ *attention paid to it.*

“ Newport School. Application was made to
 “ the Committee for twenty pair of sheets; ten
 “ pair were only sent. The beds here are scanty
 “ and miserable for two girls, and no bolsters.

“ At Longford School, in the Report of the
 “ year 1785, are these words:

‘ We recommend to the Society, that the
 ‘ whole inside of the house be white-
 ‘ washed, as being both necessary and
 ‘ healthful, and the ceiling of the two
 ‘ rooms where the children lie be repaired,
 ‘ being very much out of order.’

“ Five of the Local Committee also add:

‘ We approved of the proposal of white-
 ‘ washing at 1d. per yard.’

“ Yet on my visit, July the 9th, nothing done,

“ the house going to ruin. The master said the
 “ Committee of Fifteen thought it too high, but
 “ I found another’s estimate still dearer. He also
 “ said, that on Mr. Archdeacon Hutchinson’s lady
 “ and Mrs. Webster being present, they said it
 “ was impossible to shift the children twice a week,
 “ they having only two shifts a-piece : he applied
 “ for a third shift, but it was not granted.

“ The small allowance for soap, and the not
 “ sending towels for the children, is a principal
 “ reason why the hands, &c. of the children are
 “ never clean, as no soap is allowed for that pur-
 “ pose ; and, in consequence, many have on their
 “ heads, hands, and feet, eruptions.

“ In many of the schools is one or more idiots,
 “ so grossly the Society has been imposed on :
 “ those should be removed, and kept entirely
 “ separate.

“ In the sixth rule of the Society’s proceedings
 “ are these words :

‘ The mistresses are to take care that the
 ‘ children have clean linen twice a week.’

“ Thus this good rule stands recorded, but abso-
 “ lutely prevented by the scanty allowance of only
 “ two shifts or two shirts.

“ Most of the gardens belonging to the schools
 “ are quite neglected and overrun with weeds,
 “ when many of the boys, with small spades,

“ hoes, &c. would be more usefully employed in
“ the cultivation of vegetables for the house.

“ At Ray School were only seven beds for
“ twenty-one boys.

“ I hope I am not an advocate for an extra-
“ vagant and profuse allowance; I would only
“ plead for necessaries, in such a moderate quan-
“ tity as may support health and strength for
“ labour, and future usefulness in life, and that it
“ may do credit and honour to the Society.
“ Though some gentlemen may think me censo-
“ rious, I flatter myself others will acquit me of
“ that charge. I beg gentlemen will believe that
“ it is with reluctance I complain, but commend
“ with pleasure.”

“ Your Committee then called upon Richard
Vincent, Esq. one of the Committee of Fifteen,
who informed them he was elected in spring, 1783;
he conceives the schools of the Incorporated Society
were always as full as their funds would allow.
The Committee are very exact in inquiring into
the parents and religion of the child; and if the
certificate does not satisfy them, they reject the
child. The master draws out a list of the children,
prepares his accounts, convenes the Local Com-
mittees, who inspect and sign them, and then
return them to the Committee of Fifteen, from
which returns they make up their accounts of chil-
dren in the schools. The Society charges 20s. for

the labour of three-fourths of the children, or 15s. for the whole of them. Says the average expense of the Society for seven years, ending the 1st of November, 1787, was £12,413. 14s. 9½d. The average expense of each child, not deducting for their labour, was £7. 17s. 1¾d. during same period; and the average expense of each child to the public (deducting the allowance for labour) in same period, was £7. 4s. 1¾d. In these averages are included the children in the several nurseries. The Reports of the Local Committees, (several of which were here read,) received in last month, give a favourable statement of the condition of the schools. Mr. Vincent has heard complaints from the Local Committees of the children's clothes being too small. He here observed, that it is the practice of the Local Committee at Clonmel to report on nothing but the master's accounts. That the plan for appointing visitors commenced in May last. The average net income of the Society for the last seven years was £11,984. 6s. 8d. The number of children apprenticed from the Society's Schools since the establishment, previous to Michaelmas, was 6447. He has very good reason to believe that very few of them relapsed again to popery. He founds his opinion upon the returns of several masters of the schools, and of the Local Committees, in consequence of an application made to them by order of the Society. It appeared in the last printed proceedings of the Society, there were Cate-

chist Visitors appointed last summer to attend the schools, who are extremely active and vigilant in their duty: these are usually the curates. The Ranelagh Schools were vested by act of Parliament in the Incorporated Society in the year 1760. The funds of the Ranelagh Schools amount to about £900 annually, which he does not include in the average either of the income or expenditure, or in the number of children. Twenty acres of land adjoining the town of Athlone, which belong to the Ranelagh School, in which boys are kept: there are two schools, one for boys, the other for girls. He has very good reason to believe the lands let by the Society to the several masters are let at a very low rate. He founds his opinion upon the returns made from Local Committees last summer, who mentioned, almost in every instance, that they were let at a low rate. Mr. Vincent says that the school-lands at Ardbracken are let at 12s., and are well worth 18s. Founds his opinion upon the Report of the Local Committee made last summer, which was signed by several respectable names. Mr. Vincent says, that the last sermon preached for the Incorporated Society was in the year 1787. There was no sermon from the year 1782 to 1787*: there was no sermon in England

* These sermons having been preached and published as eulogies on the Society, were examined, and the false statements detected. They have therefore been discontinued, as it is far easier to apply to Parliament, than to court public investigation.

during that time. There were at Michaelmas last, forty boys in Sligo School, which, at £7. 4s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. make £289. The £250 a year from the Governors of Erasmus Smith's Schools is applied to the general funds of the Society, The expense of Sligo School, for the quarter ending 25th December last, was £66. 8s. The total expense of said school for the last year, ending 29th September, 1787, was £363. 7s. 3d.; and the expense of said school for the last seven years, ending 29th Sept. 1787, was £2538. 11s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Mr. Vincent being asked, Whether the printed book, intituled, "An Abstract of the Proceedings of the Incorporated Society," contains a full and true statement? He answered, that so far as the account of the state and condition of the schools now subsisting, he did compare them with the several titles and latest returns, and he does think it a true and exact statement*. As for the accounts, he did not examine them.

"The reason, as Mr. Vincent recollects, for removing the girls from Athlone to Roscommon School, was there being a garrison in Athlone, and the Society did not think it so proper a place for girls.

"Mr. Vincent stated to your Committee an account of the number of children in the Charter Schools and Nurseries in each of the last seven

* Why has not this been continued?

years, exclusive of those in the Ranelagh Schools,
viz.

" Years ending 29th September, 1781.....	1401
1782.....	1474
1783.....	1490
1784.....	1867
1785.....	1691
1786.....	1644
1787.....	1661

" Mr. Vincent being asked, Whether he heard complaints that the Local Committee's Reports had not been founded on truth? He answered, he did not. He has heard other gentlemen complain, besides Mr. Howard, *of the dirt and filthiness of the schools, and the children not being taken care of*: he might have heard these complaints four or five times in his life. Says, it would be too much, saying the Reports of the Local Committees are always true, but believes they are generally so.

" Mr. Vincent states, that in the year 1782,

The Secretary of the Society had	£250 per annum.
Assistant Secretary	100
Clerk	60
Messengers ..	20

Gross amount of salaries at that period 430

" Mr. Gibbons, Secretary to the Incorporated Society, informed your Committee that the above sum of £430 is reduced now, by the death of the Assistant Secretary, £100 per annum, and a reduction from the Clerk of £20 per annum.

“ The Society pays for their house £51 per annum. Upon the death of the present Secretary there is a reduction to be made in the salary of £150 per annum: the future secretary is to be allowed £100 per annum, with coals, candles, and house-room.

“ Mr. Gibbons says that the grants for buildings and repairs have been fairly and truly expended*. The large repairs are carried on by a certificate from the Local Committee: estimates and smaller repairs are sometimes made by the Local Committee themselves. Says, the charter empowers the Corporation to elect fifteen out of their body, who are to continue for one year, and transact the business of the Society. The Local Committees are generally appointed by the Committee of Fifteen, sometimes by a General Meeting, and usually consist of gentlemen of some consideration in the neighbourhood of the school, and sometimes of the ladies in the neighbourhood. The Committee of Fifteen meet generally every Wednesday: they must have three to make a quorum. The charging the master with the work of the children has been

* One most important fact to be ascertained, is the gross amount of the building and repairs of school-houses; which, when deducted from the grants and income of the Society at that time, will furnish a striking contrast with the enormous expenditure of 1817, when these expenses have ceased in a great measure.

a practice since he has known any thing of the Society, which is about thirty years; and believes it may sometimes be the cause of making them work at too early a period. *He has heard complaints sometimes of their being kept too long at work. Mr. Gibbons thinks that, in several instances, the practice of the masters being charged for the work of the children is prejudicial to them, as it may prevent the children from being sufficiently fed by the masters, as they will make up the charge in some manner.* Masters in general verify their accounts, every quarter, on oath before a magistrate. He believes that it would be better, in general, if the Society did not charge for the work of the children. Generally, three-fourths of the children in the schools are above seven years old, and he believes the masters make them sometimes work *under that age*. It is fifteen years since Mr. Gibbons visited any Charter School but that on the Strand. The Society charges 15s. per year for the labour of each child. There is now £3. 16s. 0½d. per annum, allowed for the support of each child; formerly only £3. 2s. 6d. allowed. This increase took place last March.

“ Mr. Vincent says, the Reports of the Catechist Visitors have been very favourable, except as to *learning*, and some of them favourable as to that; and that the latest Reports mention a proficiency in respect to learning. Mr. Gibbons says, that the

gross annual income applicable to the Ranelagh Schools, is £1033; out of which is to be deducted £100 crown rent, and there is also paid to the agent £50 per annum. There is rent paid to General Sandford for land, for the use of Roscommon School, £32. 10s. or 11s.; and there is some part of the estate set apart for Athlone Schools: says, the accounts of the Charter Schools and Ranelagh Schools are kept apart; those of the Charter Schools are settled between the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Society at large. Mr. Gibbons states the gross income of the Society, (exclusive of Ranelagh Schools,) for the last seven years, viz.

“ Year ending 1st November, deducting pells, poundage, chief rents, and receivers’ fees		£.	s.	d.
1781	9598	2	5½	
1782	11717	1	10½	
1783	8213	16	9½	
1784	9811	10	2½	
1785	16098	18	0	
1786	13287	6	3	
1787	14860	2	7	

“ Mr. Gibbons says, the applications of the Local Committees have not always been complied with; the Committee of Fifteen have complied with them where they thought their applications reasonable: he believes that when an order has been made by the Committee of Fifteen upon an application from a Local Committee, the order

has been generally complied with. Instances have been where Local Committees complained that they did not get the things so speedily as they were ordered; that the delay was occasioned by the want of carriers, especially where the parcels to be sent were small.

“ Mr. Gibbons believes that the children of Papists as well as the children of Protestants are admitted into Sligo School : he says the gross rent-roll of Ranelagh Schools is about £1012. Deductions from thence, Crown rent, £100. 4s. 4d. Receiver, £50. The expense of the two Ranelagh Schools for the last year, ending 25th December, 1787, was £699. 7s.

The amount of the sums received from Erasmus Smyth's trustees, in 1781, £250 ; in 1782, £250 ; in 1783, £250 ; in 1784, £250 ; and in 1787, £500*.

“ Mr. Gibbons being asked in what manner he settles his accounts? He answered, that there is a Committee of accounts appointed at the annual meeting of the Society, who examine into the several orders for money on the treasurer in favour of the secretary, (which are the only orders for money,) and examine into the sums remitted to

* Calculating on the vast rise in the value of property since 1787, What sum is now annually received by the Society from this source?

him by agents, or paid him by subscribers, and examine every voucher. This Committee takes several days in going through the accounts, &c.

“ Mr. Gibbons produced several books of accounts, from which his abstracts laid before your Committee have been taken, and they appear to be regularly kept.

“ It appears to your Committee that Mr. Gibbons keeps a ledger, in which all the accounts with the several schools are inserted ; and that said ledger is audited by a Committee of respectable gentlemen every year, and then the ledger is transcribed and sent to the imprest office ever since the law was enacted respecting passing accounts*.

“ It appears to your Committee, that Mr. Gibbons receives quarterly accounts from every school, which are done in a prescribed form, printed, and filled up very explicitly. The incidental expenses are verified by affidavit where there is any thing novel, and in all ordinary cases are verified by the Local Committees.

“ Mr. Gibbons says, that in the account of the gross amount of the income of the last year, he includes all the grants and legacies of what kind soever, (except the grants to Lord Ranelagh's schools,) all which grants and legacies are accounted for to the Society. The net expenditure

* Let Copies of these Accounts for each year be called for.

from November, 1786, to November, 1787, was £13,097; the income for same period was £10,926. 12s. 3½d. He says, a Mrs. Freeman is employed by the Society to superintend the purchasing and cutting out of all the clothing for the children, for which she is allowed a salary of £40 per annum: she sends in her account and is paid quarterly. Until this present year, the children were clothed at 25s. per head, and formerly at 20s.: now they are clothed in a manner recommended by Mr. Forde, and made up in Dublin: the cloth is purchased from a Mr. Faucett in High Street: but there are nine schools and one nursery to which this new regulation has not yet been extended, but they furnish materials and making in the country. Being asked what was the income of the Incorporated Society for the year ending November, 1787, deducting legacies, and every other sum that does not belong to that year? He answered, that the gross income of the Society for the year ending 1st November, 1787, was £15,641. 8s. 2d., but the sums* received within that time amounted to £10,926. 12s. 3½d. Being asked, Was the said sum of £15,641. 8s. 2d. affected by quit rents and chief rents, pells, and poundage? he answered, it was, to the amount of £781. 5s. 7d. which leaves a produce for the

* What sums? Parliament that year granted £11,000.

year of £14,860. 2s. 7d. Mr. Gibbons says, there have been complaints from several of the masters of the schools, of the insufficiency of some part of the clothing, both in quantity and quality, and of the size of the clothes. Similar complaints have been made from some of the Local Committees.

“ Mr. Gibbons supposes the expense of transplanting the children might be about £50 per annum. Says, the motive of transplanting them is to remove them *from the influence of Popish parents, and seduction by them or their means.*”

“ Mr. Parsons, a member of this House, being present, informed your Committee, that he has heard farmers in the country object to take Charter School children into their service, because they, being accustomed to better diet, were not satisfied with the diet that it was usual for them to give their servants.

“ Your Committee next called before them Mr. Arthur Cooper, of the treasury, who produced a book, from which he read, “ Orders made by the “ Trustees of Erasmus Smyth, Esq. dated the 2d “ February, 1750, and 26th March, 1756, for “ granting £250 a year to the Charter School of “ Sligo, and accommodating it with sixteen acres “ of land.” Your Committee then examined Mr. Cooper, who said, he thought he was not warranted to pay any money to Charter Schools without the

direction of the Governors of Erasmus Smyth's Schools; and a doubt had arisen whether any money ought to be paid, as the number of the children mentioned in the agreement had not been kept; and also some doubted whether the governors had a right to make such agreement: he sometimes mentioned to Mr. Gibbons the reason that it was not paid was for want of money, which, when there was any, was in his hands, and no part of it in the treasurer's hands.

“ Your Committee, lastly, called upon Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick, Knt., inspector-general of prisons. He visited twenty-eight Charter Schools in the years 1786 and 1787: the last he visited was in October and February last: he found the children *puny*, and not in that state of health children generally are. The children in general *filthy and ill clothed*; *he has seen them without shifts or shirts, and in such a situation as was indecent to look at*: he found the diet in general insufficient for the support of their delicate frames; the potatoes very often bad; very bad poor milk, and in small quantities; the oatmeal good. He is convinced that the instruction of the children is in general *very much neglected*. Says in general the children have the itch, and other eruptive disorders. Says, the church of the Reverend Alexander Ball is not a mile from Ray School, He met Mr. Ball at the Bishop of Raphoe's, who said he had not been long appointed Catechist

Visitor of Ray School. The situation in which Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick found it, Mr. Ball was very much ashamed of.

“ Says, the master of Ballinrobe School was only three months in office, the other having been, as witness is informed, removed on a complaint. He has seen many of the reports of the Local Committees entered in the school books, that did not correspond with the state in which he found the schools : in general, the reports were more favourable than he found the schools deserved, and believes there could not be a difference in the time of his visiting. Says, he objected to the masters to some of the reports when he saw them, and received no satisfactory answer. His objections were in general to the children's health and information.

“ He mentioned to your Committee the endeavours of two gentlemen, who were Local Committeemen, to give notice of his approach to the Charter Schools at Frankford and Newport, which he prevented by more than ordinary expedition. Says, that the schools he visited were in bad repair, with an exception of five or six. Being desired to name such of the Charter Schools in which the children were taken good care of, as to clothing, maintenance, and education, which he has given a Report of, he answered, that none of them were to his entire satisfaction ; but those in the best order were Ballycastle, Cashel, Castle-Island, Dundalk, May-

nooth, and Newmarket. He saw Waterford and Stradbally Schools only in a cursory manner, and therefore did not report on them; but what he saw of these schools he liked very well.

“ He turned to his Report on Castlebar School, dated the 30th of July, 1787, from whence it appears that there were two girls of seventeen years of age, two of fifteen, five of fourteen, and five of thirteen years of age, but one of whom could write, and that very badly; *some could not read, and some not spell, although they were eight years in the school*; and to confirm this, he says, that they were at the school of Santry on the 16th of September last, and they appeared to be nearly as ignorant as before: *the mistress of Santry school is taking a great deal of pains with them*. He observes, that by one of the regulations of the Incorporated Society, the girls are to be bound out at the age of fourteen; but the masters and mistresses find it their advantage to keep them ignorant, so as that no person may be induced to take them apprentice, by which means they have the advantage of their labour, though their diet and clothing are paid for. He considers the school of Charleville in an inconvenient situation; it is eight miles removed from a bog, and near one mile from fresh water. He thinks Longford School is in an inconvenient situation; the draw-well

water is sometimes brackish ; and in the summer season there is no water convenient nearer than something less than a mile. He has known children to get diarrhœas from drinking this brackish water. The school at Ballinrobe is inconvenient to water. Craggane School is built on a very uneven rocky piece of ground. *He says, the female school of Dundalk is one of the best attended schools in this kingdom.* No playground.

“ Being asked, Whether any of the schools would answer for the reception of externs? He mentioned Ballinrobe, Cashel, Castle-Island, Castledermot, Castlebar, Dundalk, Frankford, Galway, Maynooth, Newport, New Ross, Sligo, Stradbally, and Trim schools, as very proper for that purpose ; and says, most of the other schools would be fit for the reception of the neighbouring externs.

“ Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick says, that the masters of schools in general complained of not having the same opportunity of employing the children in the manufacturing of their own clothes, and that the quality of the cloth is not so good, or so strong, as those which they have hitherto manufactured themselves, of which he has been a witness : this, together with not fitting the different sized children in the various schools, when sent ready-made from Dublin,

seems to require consideration. And he further observes, that the Charter School lands are not in an improved state, which he attributes to the uncertain tenures the masters have of the schools and lands, and their not being allowed for their improvement.

“ Your Committee then proceeded to compare some of the Local Committees’ Reports and Catechist Visitors’ letters with Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick’s Reports on the same schools, a few of which comparisons they think proper to state. The Catechist Visitor’s letter of Castlebar School, dated 26th August, 1787, being read, your Committee called upon Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick for his opinion, and Report, of the same school in the month preceding, dated 30th July, 1787: and the Report, of the said Catechist Visitor having mentioned, “ that it was his uniform “ practice, since he became curate of that parish, “ to attend to this duty ;” your Committee think it their duty to observe, that the said *Reports are contradictory to each other**.

“ A Report of the Local Committee on Castle-carberry School, dated 15th September, 1786; and another, dated December 11th, 1786, being read, your Committee called upon Sir Jeremiah

* The Catechist reported in his own favour with the view of entitling himself to his salary, not aware of the investigation.

Fitzpatrick for his Report of the same school, dated November 12th, 1786, in which is given a very bad account of the state of the school and children; “ that there was no appearance “ of a school-room; that part of a window was “ stuffed with turf-kish and dung; and that there “ were but twenty-four ragged shirts and shifts, “ though there were eighteen girls and fourteen “ boys in the school, most of them sickly “ wretched-looking creatures, covered with the “ itch: two only could read, and all order “ appeared to have been neglected; but that “ the master’s and mistress’s apartments were “ comfortable and well furnished, as likewise the “ parlour, which served for a Committee-room.”

But on reading the said Reports of the 15th September and 11th December, 1786, we find that none of the said circumstances are stated therein, nor any objection made to the conduct of the master or mistress, or to the care taken of the children. Your Committee, however, think it their duty to take notice, that on a representation of Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick to the Committee of Fifteen, the master of said school was immediately dismissed. The Reports of the Local Committees on said school, dated 29th January, 5th March, 3d May, 28th June, 1st October, and 27th December, 1787, were read. These Reports make no observations on the con-

duct of the master, on the bedding, clothing, or diet; nor do they make any observation on the boys' learning, save only what is done by annexing a letter to their names; as, for example, W to signify such a boy is learning to write, and B to shew he is learning the Bible, and so on. Catechist Visitor's Report on said school, dated 19th February, 1788, read, stating, "that since his last Report to the Society, he has still found the Charter School at Castlearberry properly conducted, the children advance in improvement as fast as can be expected, and the greatest cleanliness and good order are preserved:" also another Report from the same Catechist Visitor, dated 17th March, 1788, was read, stating, "that since his last Report he has uniformly had occasion to express satisfaction at the present management of the school at Castlearberry; found the rooms and beds in the cleanest order; the children all well; he saw them at work: catechised them, heard them read, and examined their writing. Every thing wore the face of improvement."

"The Report of the Catechist Visitor of Galway School, dated 17th August, 1787, read, which Report makes no objection to the state of the school. Your Committee called upon Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick for his Report on the same school, dated August 7th, 1787, which states, "that in general the children read very ill; two of them,

“ fourteen years old, cannot spell words of two
 “ syllables; their education seems to be totally, at
 “ least very much, neglected.”

“ A Report of the Local Committee of Inniscarra School, read, stating, “ that they found every
 “ part of the house in the same cleanly good order
 “ as usual.” The Report of the Catechist Visitor on the same school, dated 19th January, was read, which states, “ that he has examined the children
 “ in the principles of the Christian religion, and
 “ assures the Committee of Fifteen that their
 “ improvement is considerable.”

“ Your Committee observe, that the Catechist Visitor of Ray School reported “ the school
 “ in a very good condition;” although it appears in the evidence already stated, that the said Visitor was ashamed of the state in which Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick found Ray School.

“ *Schedule Annexed to the Report of the Committee on the State of the PROTESTANT CHARTER SCHOOLS.*

“ Report on Charter Schools by Sir JEREMIAH FITZPATRICK.

“ HE states that he visited twenty-eight Charter Schools, in most of which he found the children rather delicate, many of them afflicted with itch, scald, &c.; and that the athleticness so strongly

marked in the children of the poor in this kingdom, however shabby their clothing, is not to be found in Charter Schools, which he attributes in a great measure to the nature of their employments, the bad quality of their food, to confinement, and to the effects of unwholesome exhalations from filthy bed-clothes and foetid straw enclosed in odiously besmeared tickens. He says, the nature of their labour injures the health of many, who sit carding and spinning at the linen wheels; the attitudes cripple their limbs, whilst the constant discharge of saliva to wet the thread injures their digestion; and employed at the large wheels, their limbs being yet in a gristly state, they contract the habit of turning in their knees and toes, and otherwise become distorted, which follows from the positions into which they are thrown, which, even at the state of manhood, speaks their early employments; and by the master's paying for the children's labour, he becomes more interested in the profits arising from it than in their making the wished progress either in a proper knowledge of the principles of *religion* or *education*. He also states, that the Charter School lands are in general in worse condition than the neighbouring grounds: this he attributes to masters not being allowed for their improvements, as also to the uncertainty of their tenures.

“ His Report states the situation of each school,

the number and dimensions of the apartments, their vicinity to towns, villages, &c. ; but, from their unavoidable prolixity, are omitted in this Report.

“ He particularly recommended cleanliness, viz. white-washing the houses, and keeping the bedding and apparel perfectly clean, as well the tickens as bed-clothes, which, from the filthy manner in which they have been kept hitherto in most schools, were the principal causes of retaining and conveying the infection of scald, itch, and other maladies, to which *Charter School children are more subject than others*. Another principal object of his has been to recommend play-hours in the open air every day.”

“ KILKENNY C. S. 12th February, 1785.

“ JOHN MAGGIN, Master.

“ THE house is situated a mile from the city. There were thirty-two children, many of them very small, and almost all looked miserable ; and their wretched appearance was enhanced by their being *barefooted and ragged*. Though boys, they were employed in carding and spinning, and sat on stools and stone-seats in a cold workshop. On the morning of the day of my visit it snowed heavily, yet the room in which they were at work was without fire,

although it was ready for lighting. I asked, why it was not lighted? A person who superintended the labour of the children, demanded of them (with an angry tone of voice), why they had not lighted it before? Two of them, with a look of terror, arose, and instantly obeyed. After having examined the situation of the house, where I found the beds abominably filthy, education most culpably neglected, and many of the children afflicted with itch and scald, I rode off; but suspecting, from what I had seen, that the children would not long enjoy the benefit of the fire, I returned on foot through the fields, and found that they had already extinguished it by pouring water on it.

“The barbarity of this treatment to the wretched objects of public benevolence, was one of my first and principal inducements to persevere in the inspection of Charter Schools.”

“ARKLOW C. S. 30th April, 1785.

“ON visiting this school, in which were twenty-four girls and nine boys, and perceiving two young women, one of sixteen years old, the other of fifteen, who had some appearance in their dress of being scholars of the house, I inquired for the mistress, but was told she had been two years dead, and that these young women (each of whom

had a room) attended to the female children. The master was under thirty years of age, and his brother, who acted as usher, was twenty-two; each of them likewise had a room; so that the school, which consisted but of six apartments besides the kitchen, afforded but two rooms for thirty children, and these were filthily kept. The master was dismissed."

" FRANKFORT C. S. 26th December, 1785.

" M. LARGE, Mistress.

" WHEN I visited this school, there were twenty-two girls and sixteen boys on the establishment, very badly clothed; and although the frost was very severe, and a little snow had fallen, the greater number of the children were barefooted. Their occupation was spinning, and the workshop was exceedingly cold. Their education seemed totally neglected. On examining the books, and finding the ages of more grown boys than those I saw, the mistress told me they were then employed at agriculture, and that she would send for them. This answer surprised me exceedingly, as the weather was so severe; however, I determined to see the fact myself, and immediately rode to the field they were in, at some distance from the house, where I found five boys nearly perished with cold,

for they were miserably clothed: the two who were digging the potatoes had old brogues on, but the two who were picking them, and a small boy, who was making a fire of a few rotten sticks at some distance in a ditch, for the purpose of warming them, had neither shoe nor stocking. The house was in bad order, and several of the windows were broken. Most of the children looked delicate: a few of them were recovering from the scald; and three had the itch. The beds were filthy."

" NEWPORT C. S. 28th December, 1785.

" M. NORTH, Mistress.

" THERE are thirty-eight boys in this house: five of them, very small, had been lately sent from Channel-row, Dublin. The rooms were very cold, the sash-frames bad, several windows broken; however, the beds were tolerable. The mistress had the five best rooms for her own use; and complained that she was not allowed wheels or working utensils. Several of the children read tolerably well."

" CHARLEVILLE C. S. 2d January, 1786.

" ANDREW LEIGHTON, Master.

" WHEN I arrived at this place, the weather was exceedingly cold, and the snow above twenty

inches deep. There were seventeen boys and nine girls in the school, all ragged. I entered the house unexpectedly, leaving my servant at a distance, which is my custom, lest the idea of inspection should occur to the master. This precaution afforded me the opportunity of seeing two little girls sitting on a table in the school-room, which was damp and clay-floored, without any fire; their little legs were under each other's petticoats, to keep them warm; at the same time a girl of ten years old was blowing on her infant sister's fingers, to procure them a temporary relief from the excessive cold. *The windows of every room were broken, the beds filthy; and there was not a single sheet in the house for the children's use, whose education was shamefully neglected.* The master said the house would be repaired before the next board day, and that sheets and bedding were daily expected from Dublin; he also said that the children would be clothed and get shoes by twelfth day. He told me that he permitted them to go in turn to the kitchen fire, which was the only one he could keep; the bog being eight miles off, turf cost him from 2s. to 3s. a kish, and in the summer season he was obliged to send a mile for water; two of the children were very delicate, highly hectic; a few had the itch, and one the scald. I saw a tailor at work; and on asking the master why a few of the children, who were almost naked, were not clothed,

as their clothes were already furnished? He answered, that if any were supplied until they could all be gratified, a jealousy would take place; or words to that purpose. I met a gentleman from Limerick, who saw every thing I have described. I represented to the Committee of Fifteen the necessity of enlarging the allowance for fire, which they said they would attend to."

" TRIM C. S. 9th August, 1786.

" THIS house, which contained forty-one girls, consisted of eleven rooms, three of which the master occupied, besides a hall and kitchen. Twelve of the children were ill of a fever, in a kind of stable or outhouse, as there was no hospital. The school-room served as hall, workshop, and refectory. Fourteen of the children were spinning, and fourteen of the youngest picking cotton; one was very delicate. The hours allowed for school were from seven to nine in the morning."

" CLONMEL C. S. 15th September, 1786.

" THERE were nineteen boys in this school, every one of whom was barefooted and ragged. There was no appearance of education, except that

a few of the children could read a little: their beds and bedclothes were exceedingly filthy, and there was scarcely a sheet (in addition to their nastiness) on any of the beds. The master's and mistress's apartments, and the committee-room, were comfortable, and well furnished. On visiting it again last April, dirt and irregularity equally prevailed."

" NEWMARKET C. S. 26th September, 1786.

" M. CHADWICKE, Master.

" THERE were nine girls and six boys on the establishment; and twenty-four boys and thirteen girls, who came from different schools, were apprenticed to the master, who carried on the cotton manufactory. The children on the establishment were tolerably well clothed, except as to shoes and stockings, which they wore only on Sundays, yet they seldom went to prayers, as the church was at a considerable distance; and whenever they did go, they had neither pew, nor even a seat in the aisle of the church to sit on, but were obliged to stand or kneel on the cold moist flags during the service. The mode of indenting the children appeared to me improper, as there were some of them very young, others of them more advanced, who could not even read, bound to the master; but in respect to writing they were totally ignorant:

he, however, disclaimed the obligation of instructing them ; although it seemed to me, whenever children were apprenticed, if not previously instructed as the charter requires, that it should be made obligatory on the masters to get them taught, and their attendance on divine worship enforced ; especially as they are too frequently bound at so early an age, that were they to serve only the usual time of apprenticeship, which is generally allotted in this country, giddy, unthinking, and uninformed, they probably would return to their natural connexions, and become subject to their influence."

" CASTLE-ISLAND C. S. 30th Sept. 1786.

" MARTIN TWISS, Master.

" THERE were twelve boys and ten girls in this house, who read and wrote very well for their ages. The school was kept in very good order, but there were some repairs wanting over the porch, and a gate in the front. Two of the girls were apprentices, each of whom will be twenty-one years old before her time will be expired. The beds and bedclothes were clean, and in good order."

“CASTLE-CARBERRY C. S. 12th Nov. 1786.

“—— JACKSON, Master.

“ I FOUND all the children of this house, eighteen girls and fourteen boys, without shoes or stockings, and six little girls without shifts. The linen which the other children wore was ragged and filthy, and did not appear to have been washed from the time it was converted to their use. The children were shivering with cold, and the girls were eating bad potatoes, in a cold wet passage, off a dirty table. Labourers and other persons were comfortably accommodated at dinner near the kitchen fire. *The beds, which were shockingly dirty, were mere wisps, and covered with rotten blankets. On seven beds for boys, there was but one pair of foul sheets; and the seven beds for girls were filthy beyond description, stinking and wet, without a single sheet; and twenty panes of glass were broken in the windows, through which the wind and rain beat in.* The windows in the boys' room were likewise shattered, and wisps of straw and rotten rags were substituted as a defence against the inclemency of the weather, to render them habitable. There was no appearance of a school-room, though the master shewed me a wretched place in which he said they were educated: the lower part of the window, which

was carried away, was supplied by part of an old turf-kish stuffed with dung. On examining the children's change of linen, I found but twenty-four ragged filthy-looking shirts and shifts. Most of the children were sickly wretched-looking creatures; several of them covered with itch, and two had the scald. On examining them, there were but two who could read intelligibly, and all order appeared to be neglected. The master's and mistress's apartments were comfortable, and well-furnished, as was the parlour, which served as a committee-room. The master told me, the children were to be new-clothed at Christmas. On making this Report to the Society, the master was dismissed."

"MAYNOOTH C. S. 23d November, 1786.

"HENRY OGLE, Master.

"THIS house, which contains thirty-nine boys, is tolerably commodious, with a convenient garden, but being flagged with limestone, the ground-floors are constantly damp in wet weather, which might be easily remedied by flooring them with tiles or firestone. Many of the boys were barefooted, which the master said they prefer, and others of them are deficient of clothes. There are seventeen beds, all in very good order, and clean. I recom-

mended that fires should be made in the damp rooms, as some of the children had coughs, and that three beds more should be set up, so as to have but two in a bed. The children's health is impaired by the constant discharge of saliva in spinning flax, but the exercise in the garden recovers them. There is no usher allowed. In July, 1787, I found matters much more pleasing to me."

" FARRA. 13th July, 1787.

" JOHN BREW, Master.

" THIS house contains twenty-eight boys, fifteen of whom are in absolute want of clothing, being lately transferred from other schools, and eleven have neither shoes nor stockings; two are afflicted with sore eyes, two with the diarrhoea, and one with a sore throat: there being no medical assistant, I prescribed for them. They are employed in working about the house and garden. The house is in great want of white-washing. The bed tickens are very bad, and in a filthy condition. The sheets, which are but few, are mere rags; but there are twelve pair of blankets and twelve rugs that are tolerable. The education of the children must be much neglected, as they are almost illiterate."

“ LONGFORD. 14th July, 1787.

“ ALEXANDER HARRISON, Master.

“ THIS house contains forty-one boys, and is on a rising ground a mile from the town : it is kept clean, and the beds regular, but the sheets are rather bad, yet they are taken proper care of. There are twenty-one beds in two rooms. The roof is double, and though joisted, is neither lathed nor ceiled, which renders the house cold. The floors of the school-room and committee-room, in the latter of which the master and mistress sleep, are much broken. The house is supplied with water from a well, which is often dry or bad in summer, and disagrees with the children. Though each child has but two shirts, yet they are shifted twice a week. The master and mistress, who always get the annual premium of £8, deserve encouragement for their care and assiduity. Many of the children are very young, and yet in petticoats, which are, however, tolerably good : eleven of them almost naked, and without shoe or stocking, have been lately transmitted from Carberry, one of whom is an idiot twenty years old. One of the children has the scald, two have sore eyes. The children in general have no labour. The bog is two miles off, and to which there is no road : it was granted to the house by Lord Longford. Christopher M'Caf-

fry, aged fifteen years, who is afflicted with an evil in his knee, writes very well, and with care will be qualified in another year to become an assistant. The walls want white-washing, and the house is much out of repair."

" ROSCOMMON C. S. 19th July, 1787.

" THOMAS HURST, Master.

" THIS house contained forty girls, twenty of whom are employed in spinning, thirteen in knitting, one in reeling, and six were small. They rise at six o'clock, and are kept to catechism, reading, &c. until nine, at which hour they breakfast, and are set to work until one, when they dine: after dinner they are kept at school until three; from which time they work until seven; then they sup, and go to bed. Six of them are from thirteen to sixteen years old. They had good clothes, but are not allowed to wear them on working days, on which they are very ragged. They looked very indifferently, and appeared rather dirty, their linen being foul and ill coloured. The beds are tolerable. A few of the children were afflicted with cutaneous eruptions. Here it was absolutely necessary to recommend play and exercise in the open air."

“ SLIGO C. S. 26th July, 1787.

“ M. HART, Master.

“ THIS house, which is three stories high, is spacious, well-built, and situated within a quarter of a mile of the town. It contains twenty-five boys and seventeen girls, all barefooted, for the most part ragged, and illiterate. There were eleven beds in the room in which the boys slept, which were all filthy, and had but three tickens, and very few bolsters. The sheets in general were very foul. The girls' sleeping-room was equally filthy, and had no tickens, and but two bolsters on eight beds. The master had three apprentices, who were working barefooted at a dunghil, viz. William Kavanagh, aged seventeen years, was bound to him in July, 1785; James Henley, and William Connell, each nineteen years old, indented in December, 1783. Kavanagh and Connell read very badly, could scarcely write their names, and did not know a single figure; Henley could not even spell; yet two of them had been *twelve years in this school*. Mary M'Kenzie, aged fourteen years, indented in July, 1785, was totally illiterate, though in the school since 1780. The master said the boys forgot their learning since they were bound to learn agriculture, which is the only employment they have. Several of them have

eruptions, some look very delicate, but there are others who look strong and healthful. George Kildea eloped last week. Young Master and Miss Hart occupy two rooms on the middle floor, which are well lighted, and measure each twenty-eight feet by eighteen feet."

" BALLINROBE C. S. 29th July, 1787.

" THIS house, which is built on the green, is healthfully situated, but inconvenient to water, and is in a wretched condition, the upper floors being badly laid, and the ceilings all broken. There are twenty-nine boys, three of whom lie in each bed; fourteen of them are lately recovered from the measles; one, an idiot, aged nine years, lies on a most filthy bed; two are hectical, and one subject to convulsions. Not one of them can read; nor is this to be wondered at, as they have but three old prayer-books, without any other kind of book; nor had the master received pens, ink, paper, &c. There is one table, and no more than two small forms, in the school-room. I recommended a mode of treating the diseased children to a Mrs. Finn, who acted as apothecary; also, that such of the children's clothes as did not fit should be altered. Some of the tickens were rotten.

There was plenty of sheets, but no more than six pair of good blankets. The master gave as his apology for the children's illiteracy, that he was but three months in the school."

" CASTLEBAR C. S. 30th July, 1787.

" JOHN KING, Master.

" THIS house contains twenty-seven girls, fourteen of whom are from thirteen to seventeen years old, one of whom only could read, and even that one very indifferently; some of the others could not spell, though twelve of them had been eight years in the school. The bedding is in general so abominably filthy, that in a few minutes sixteen of the vermin, with which they were almost alive, fastened upon me. On finding fault with this neglect of cleanliness, Mrs. King very insolently told me, in presence of a magistrate of the county, that she disregarded me, as she had *powerful friends*. Her husband had no apology to make for the illiteracy of the children, as he had held his station since the establishment of the school. *The skins of many of the children were as mottled as turkeys' eggs, by the effects of the vermin.* The looks of several of the younger children indicated their being in a bad state of health, and four of them had the

scald. There is neither privy nor garden ; but a wall is now building which will enclose a good yard. The sheets were very foul. Twelve of the elder girls, above mentioned, arrived at Santry on the 3d of October, 1787, in the state of ignorance described."

" GALWAY C. S. 7th August, 1787.

" JOSEPH CANDY, Master.

" THE situation of this house, on the banks of Lough Corrib in the western suburbs, is most excellent for a school, and might, at a small expense, be rendered capable of entertaining one hundred children, as turf, provisions, and many other necessities, might be landed from the lake at the rear of the back yard. There are twenty bedsteads in two rooms, eight of which are now unfurnished, yet there is some bedding ready if necessary. The number of boys when I was there was but twenty-three, of whom sixteen were at school, the rest at hay-making. In general, they read very ill ; and two of them, who are fourteen years old, cannot spell words of two syllables. In short, their education seems to be *criminally neglected*. On my observing that the usher was inattentive, I was assured he should be dismissed. There are two

large gardens belonging to the house, which are well walled. Three of the children were very delicate. John Dempsey, whose age is entered on the school-book as fourteen years and a half, yet seems to be nineteen years old; has a contraction in his elbow, and might, had he been attended to in time, have made a clerk, tailor, &c.; *but the poor wretch cannot even spell: he is five feet six inches in height, and none of the clothes sent down will fit him.*"

" LOUGHREA C. S. 16th August, 1787.

" GEORGE RANGER, Master.

" THIS house is situated a mile from the town, and is separated from the great road by a small yard and wall. There are sixteen beds occupied by forty-three girls, but the tickens are very ill stuffed. Several of the children, although five years at the school, cannot read, some cannot spell, and not one can write. They rise at six o'clock, and are employed in making the beds, cleaning themselves, the apartments, &c. until nine o'clock; they then breakfast; afterwards they spin, &c. until twelve; from twelve to two they attend school; at two they dine, and then return to labour until five; from thence until seven they are kept to catechism, &c.; and at seven they sup, and

go to bed. Most of the children look delicate, and one of them laboured under a lapsus ani. The roof of the house is stripped in several places, and the upper rooms are not ceiled; the offices are good; but the sashes and window-frames of the house are bad, and want glazing. Here, as at Roscommon, it seemed absolutely necessary to recommend exercise and play in the open air."

"ATHLONE C. S. First Visit, 20th Aug. 1787.

"JAMES SPARKS, Master.

"THIS house is in a beautiful situation on the banks of the Shannon, within a quarter of a mile of the town. All the children are barefooted, and very ragged; four of them, apparently not more than from nine to eleven years old, were drawing water on hand-barrows from the river; six were carding and spinning wool; the privy was so foul that it could not be used; the sheets were very filthy; and the walls so dirty, that I recommended white-washing them."

"SECOND VISIT, 31st August, 1787.

"The house was white-washing: two boys were carrying sand on a hand-barrow: I blamed the

master for suffering this abuse, especially as he had two horses idle near the house. The servants were laying damp sheets on the beds when I went up stairs. There are stone piers building at the entrance from the canal: at this end of the house there are two small hospital-rooms, with tiled floors, and at the other end is a barn with a store-room: the front is to the town, with the space of half an acre walled in, which might be converted into a place of exercise for the children, many of whom looked puny, and two were afflicted with eruptions. Richard Reeves, three years at Roscommon, two years here; John Clive, five years at Roscommon, two here; and James Gleese, two years at Roscommon, and two here, could not read: many others were equally defective; several of them however can read, but with a very bad accent. Major Ormsby, commanding officer of the garrison, and Captain Dennis, accompanied me in both these visits."

" RAY C. S. 23d September, 1787.

" JOHN BREW, Master.

" THIS house, which contains twenty-one boys and thirteen girls, is situated in the interior mountainous part of the country, five miles north of

Raphoe, on the declivity of a glen, and twelve miles North-west of Derry: the road to the house is through a valley, and the yard which forms the entrance to it is confined and dirty, and was a receptacle for pigs, poultry, cattle, &c. The ascent to the hall, which is rather promptly steep, the perpendicular height being ten feet, and the sloping passage but nineteen feet and a half, is the worst and most dangerous of the kind I ever saw: it would be difficult to ascend or descend the curve of the arch, on which is a pavement smooth and slippery, were it not for the battlements, which are three feet high. The under-part of the house was filthy beyond description: one of the apartments, which measured seventeen feet by fourteen feet, served as a school-room and work-room for both sexes: in it were twenty-two wheels, two reels, a table, and two forms; and it was the only place for education and labour, except that some of the strongest children were daily employed in digging and picking potatoes, herding cattle, and other business in the farm. The room in which the boys slept was eighteen feet by fourteen feet, and shamefully dirty; several of the sheets but filthy rags; most of the tickens rotten, the bedsteads old and broken, and the beds in want of stuffing; many of the bolster cases were quite empty, and the walls were shamefully filthy. The room in which the girls slept, of equal size with that of the boys, was

in every respect as disgusting, with the additional circumstances of their sheets being rent to rags. The children were wretchedly clothed; and this being Sunday, notwithstanding their tattered garbs, nineteen of them were brought to church by the master, fifteen remaining at home, two through indisposition, and thirteen for want of shoes or stockings. Some of these wanted clothes sufficient to *cover their nakedness*, but the master told me he expected clothing for them in a few days. Some thin hung beef was boiling for dinner, the broth of which was to be thickened with bursted barley, and was to serve for Monday's dinner. Education must be little attended to here, as few of the children can read. *John Halpin, aged twenty years, (who is apprenticed to the master,) can neither read nor write, though he has been five years here, and had been brought from Farra, where the master's father keeps the school.* Anne Walker, who is apprentice to the master, was reared in the house, and though seventeen years old, can neither read nor write. Anne Obery, fourteen years old, and four years in the school, can neither read nor write. The master's wife having died some months ago, a young female relation of his attends the girls. This inspection was made in presence of the Reverend Mr. Ball, Curate and Catechist."

“ BALLYKELLY C. S. 26th September, 1787.

“ ARCHBOLD CAMPBELL, Master.

“ THIS house, in which are thirty-two boys and seven girls, is about one hundred and fifty yards from the road; a wall of forty-two feet in length, and of eight feet in height, encloses the sides of the yard in front: there is a small porch at the entrance into the house. By the master's conveniencing himself with lumber closets, potatoe and fowl rooms below stairs, he has narrowed and darkened the passages to several parts of the house, which would otherwise be well lighted: this inconvenience appears the more strongly, as the entrance into the committee and school rooms are but two feet five inches wide. The boys' sleeping-room contained twelve beds, and that of the girls ten bedsteads, eight only of them furnished: five of the small boys slept in the girls' room, and there was a female child in the small-pox in it also: the sheets were disgustingly dirty, some of them mere rags; several of the tickens were filthy, and some rotten. I sent a messenger to a Mr. Hanley, a member of the Local Committee, to whom I communicated my ideas of reformation, which he approved of. The school-room was dirty, ill-flagged, and must be damp in bad weather. The children's sleeping-rooms were

neither lofted nor ceiled; seven of them only wore shoes and stockings; several looked delicate; many had the itch, and some were lately recovered from the scald; a few of them could read tolerably; although, in general, their education seemed to be much neglected. Susy Geoghegan, who had been four years a scholar in the house, and was now five years an apprentice to the master, could not read."

" BALLYCASTLE C. S. 27th September, 1787.

" M. CUMBRIDGE, Mistress.

" THIS school is about a mile from the town, and is separated from the road by a wall, which forms a yard of about one hundred feet, within which are several offices and turf-clamps, and, though paved, it is very dirty. The ascent to the hall is by two steps; but, for want of a porch, it is much exposed to the wind. The hall was formerly very spacious and well contrived; but by three closets being taken off it, each of which has a window, it is rendered very incommodious; and although it is the children's eating-room, who all stand at meals, it is crowded with chests, tables, &c. The school-room, in which both sexes were taught, though it mea-

sured but twenty feet by eighteen feet, was encumbered with a large meal bin, a bed for two servant boys, two tables, eleven wheels, three reels, seven forms, large and small, and a shoemaker at work; yet this room was the only place of tuition, when I was there: the beds were kept clean, and matters above stairs as well appointed as the circumstances of the house would admit of. The upper lofts and the ceilings of the children's sleeping-rooms were propped in several places. The new part of the house consists of six rooms, which are neatly kept, and occupied by the mistress's family and the usher. Education is not well attended to. The health of the children seemed much impaired by the constancy of spinning, knitting, carding, &c., and would be much more so were it not for the cleanliness and other regularities observed in the house.

“ N. B. I recommended play in the open air every day.”

“ STRANGFORD C. S. 4th October, 1787.

“ JOHN JACKSON, Master.

“ THIS house is near a mile from the town, and although much exposed to the influence of the winds from the bay, or great river, the children

(five excepted) appeared healthful and strong: the disorders they were troubled with, were very cutaneous, and some remains of the scald, from which they were recovering. The bolsters were old and filthy, as well as some of the tickens. I recommended a mode of conduct towards the children who wetted their beds in this house, as in other schools. I also advised the changing of the school-room, as, from the unparalleled bad structure of the chimney, fire would not burn; in consequence of which, the children were generally permitted to go to the kitchen fire. Their education is tolerably attended to here."

" CREGGANE C. S. 18th October, 1787.

" GEORGE JACKSON, Master.

" THE situation of this house is on a bleak, rugged, stony piece of ground, half a mile from the high road, and from Dundalk seven miles: it is two stories high, and in very bad order. All the offices are in a ruinous condition; and the pavement, or rather rocky surface of the ground, immediately about the building, renders the approaches to it difficult to walk on, particularly on the side of the offices and privy, to which last the boys cannot now go, in conse-

quence of puddles and flashes of water settled all about it. The situation of the house is in every respect very disadvantageous, and its condition so exceedingly bad, that most of the boys now labour under severe colds. The hall, in which the children eat, as it wants a porch, and that the fireplace is ill-contrived, is so unfit for the children during the winter season, that it is necessary to keep them in the school-room whilst the cold weather subsists; which measure I advised, and the master promised to observe it. The boys' sleeping-room, twenty-two feet by fifteen feet, contained ten old bedsteads, the tickens of them newly stuffed; but several of them, and of the bolsters, some of the sheets, and many of the blankets, were abominably filthy. The house being stripped, the mistress assured me that the rain often overflowed the room, and ran down the stairs. A room, called the girls' sleeping-room, was then unoccupied, in which were eight good bedsteads, and some bed-clothes in good condition. I disposed of the two rooms in such a manner as that neither the rain, nor the dampness of the walls, which was shocking, should be prejudicial. I proposed airing them with fire in metal pots, and sent for the slater. Some of the children can read tolerably well, though they had few books: they had no paper, and their clothes did not fit. Notwithstanding their being afflicted

with a cold, they were all, except three, picking potatoes at some distance from the house when I called."

" DUNDALK C. S. 20th October, 1787.

" M. BOLTON, Mistress.

" THE ascent to this house, which is at the entrance to the town from Ardee, is by three steps: it has a wall of six feet high in front, which encloses a small grass-plat. As two of the children were ill in the hospital-room, which was uncommonly damp, the boards rotten, and the joists barely rendered, I recommended the removal of them to the store-room, and that the maid should lie in the room, as it was dry, for the convenience of attending them. There are nine beds in one of the sleeping-rooms, and but one sheet on each: the tickens are so small, that they would require another breadth to make them fit the bedsteads: some of the blankets, and several of the rugs, are bad. In another sleeping-room are eight beds, which are not faultless. These sleeping-rooms are not ceiled; not even rendered. The garden, which is ill fenced, is constantly plundered. The school is well attended to, but should be removed from the town, as it is in want of play-ground, and undowered with land. Of forty girls that were in the

school, several looked delicate, which I attributed in a great measure to the want of play and exercise in the open air."

" SANTRY C. S. 16th November, 1787.

" WILLIAM BROWNE, Master.

" IN this house are forty-seven girls, fourteen of whom, very ill clothed, came lately from Castlebar. There are twenty-one beds in two rooms; but I recommended here, as at other schools, that some of the beds should be made of loose straw uncased, for certain reasons: several of the tickens were filthy, nearly rotten; the sheets were foul, nor was there a sufficiency of them for a change, although there were ten pair lately given. Tickens and bolsters were promised the ensuing week. The windows wanted glazing, and the sashes, which are unsound, should be replaced. The roof being faulty, the rain falls into the sleeping-rooms."

" ROYAL CHARTER SCHOOL, STRAND.

" JOHN BELL, Master, Cotton Manufacturer.

" THIS house is two miles from Dublin, and is an extensive building, with various out-offices, work-

shops, &c. At a small expense, it could be rendered capable of entertaining one hundred boys; but such is its fluctuation, that in February, 1787, there were but thirty-two boys in it; in July there were forty-five; in September, seventy-seven; and at this time sixty-six. A great number of them are small, and fifty-seven of them are at work spinning cotton: several of them do not appear to be more than seven or eight years old; many look delicate; two are feverish; and a few have cutaneous eruptions. It is really surprising how little the size of many of them corresponds with the ages set down in the books. This, however, I attribute to confinement within doors, and constant employment in the disadvantageous attitude of standing at least seven hours every day at the wheels; a time which, the master ingenuously told me, they must daily work, winter and summer, to indemnify him from the charge on their labour."

"RANELAGH ROAD HOUSE, DUBLIN.

"JOHN NEIL, Master.

"THERE is so constant an interchange of young children at this nursery, that to give an exact description or state of them would be nugatory: I shall only say, that I visit it frequently, and

find that the apartments and bedding are kept in much better condition of late than they were formerly."

"YOUR Committee think proper to state the Resolutions of the Incorporated Society, &c.

"At a General Meeting, held on Thursday the 10th of April, 1788; present nineteen Members; the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of WATERFORD in the Chair;

"RESOLVED, That it appears from the Quarterly Accounts of the Society, and from the representation thereof made to Parliament, that the number of children in the Charter Schools and Nurseries, deducting the Ranelagh Schools, on a medium of the last seven years, has amounted to one thousand six hundred and four: That the whole amount of the Parliamentary Grants, and of all other Contributions to the same, on a medium for the said term, did not exceed the sum of £12,413. 14s. 9d. from which is to be deducted the average sum charged for the labour of the children, being £985. 13s. 8d.; therefore the annual charge to the public of each child actually in the care of the Society did not exceed £7. 2s. 6d., including

“ *maintenance, clothing, education, books, medicine, expense of masters and servants, bedding, furniture, repair of houses, the Society’s house in Dublin, and the different officers attendant thereon, &c. &c.* ”

“ RESOLVED, That from the increased price of bread, meat, beer, milk, &c. the Society find it necessary to increase the dietary of each child in the Schools to *3d. per diem each*, pursuant to the Report of the Committee of this Society, bearing date the 23d May, 1797.”

“ Which resolutions were signed by the secretary to the Incorporated Society, who laid them before your Committee.

“ Your Committee think proper to mention such schools as appeared to them to be in all respects well conducted; namely, Waterford, Stradbally, Cashel, Castlemartyr, Castle-Island, Maynooth, Dundalk, Newmarket, and Ballycastle.”

“ *An Account of the average Number of Children in the CHARTER SCHOOLS OF IRELAND for the last Seven Years, ending the 1st of November, 1787; the average net Income of said Schools, and the average Expenditure for said Period, and a State of what each Child annually* ”

costs the Public; distinguishing the average Earnings of the Children for same Period, and what the Maintenance and Clothing of each Child costs annually.

“Average number of children for the last seven years, 1587.

“Average net income of the Society for the same period, £11,984. 6s. 8d.

“Average expenditure of the Society for the same period, £12,413. 14s. 9½d.

“Average expense of each child for the last seven years, charging to the account of the children the whole expenditure of the Society, amounts to £7. 17s. 1¾d. Out of that sum, the average of the earnings of the children for seven years, amounts to £985. 13s. 8d.

“The allowance for the diet of the children in the several schools was increased from the 25th of March, 1787, from £3. 2s. 6d. to £3. 16s. 0½d. per annum, for each child, except at the Strand, Santry, and Maynooth Schools, where 3d. per day is allowed.

“The clothing of the children in all the schools cost 25s. per annum, for each child; but an increase has been made to the allowance for clothing them from March, 1787.”

CHAPTER V.

PROGRESS OF THE CHARTERED SCHOOL SOCIETY FROM 1788 TO 1816.

Who can read the preceding Report without horror? Had it not been presented by a Committee of the Irish House of Commons, and supported by the evidence of witnesses so unimpeachable as Mr. Howard and Sir J. Fitzpatrick, it could not have been believed.

I shall not attempt to weaken the appeal which it cannot fail to make to every humane, honourable, and patriotic breast, by referring to any particular school, but leave the plain unvarnished tale to make its way to the hearts of all who read it.

It should stand as a beacon, to warn successive Parliaments, that, however high the station, or honourable the private character, of men who constitute public bodies receiving aid from the public purse, they ought, nevertheless, to be watched over, and the application of the funds be particularly attended to.

I can find no trace of any step having been taken by the Irish Parliament, in consequence of this Report having been presented to them.

On the 21st February, 1789, the Society again petitioned, as before; taking good care not to say any thing about parliamentary inquiry, only praying for aid; and, strange to relate, Parliament, in the face of the Report of 1788, on the 25th of the same month, voted the Society the farther sum of £12,000.

Are we to wonder at the large and increased grants of following years, when we see £12,000 voted to a Society, which, by the Report of April, 1788, stood convicted, upon testimony the most incontrovertible, of such gross neglect and mismanagement, and such unfaithfulness on the part of many of those they employed, to the trust reposed in them by their country, as to render them altogether unworthy of the smallest confidence? And yet, in the face of all this, and with an intimation from the Commissioners of Imprest Accounts, that the Society had sent in their accounts to the 1st of Nov. 1787, but that, as they had not produced vouchers, the Commissioners were obliged to postpone the examination;—in the face of all these, and without any one new regulation or check being proposed, they obtained the usual vote!

On the 2d of February, 1790, a petition was presented by them to the House, in the usual way, recommending their claim to that consideration, *which the interests of religion, and the good education of youth*, particularly demanded!

In this year, the first bill for allowing Catholics to teach, under any circumstances, passed; and they were, for the first time, allowed the guardianship of their own children. This went to enlarge the qualified bill of 1783.

In this same Session, an Act passed, appointing Commissioners to inquire into charitable bequests, &c. for the purposes of education, and to enforce the same. In this year, it appeared, by the Report of the Commissioners of Imprest, that the Society had in their hands, of the public money unapplied, £3444. 19s. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

On the 3d of February, 1791, the Society petitioned exactly as in the preceding year; and on the 12th of the same month, the House voted them £12,000. But still without any effective step being taken, that I can discover, to vindicate the cause, or ameliorate the condition, of those poor, oppressed, and injured children.

The Society again applied to Parliament on the 26th January, 1792; and on the 7th of February, in a Committee of Supply, they were voted £12,000.

On the 31st of January, 1793, an application was made, as usual; and the House, on the 7th February, granted the sum of £12,000.

The petition of this year discloses a new fact, viz. that the *interest* arising from the donations in England to the Society, is appropriated for the

payment of apprentice fees, ushers' salaries, &c. It also states, that a large bequest had been made to the Society.

It does not appear, as far as I can discover, that the Society petitioned at all in 1794. It is probable they had received such frequent pledges of the good-will of the House of Commons, and *they of the good management of the Society*, that they might safely leave it with them, and now might consider their grants as secure as those for the ordinary purposes of Government. They were voted £13,000 for that year.

On the 31st of January, 1795, the Society again petitioned; and on the 10th of February the House granted them £13,000.

We now come to two new and very important facts. Baron Vryhoven, who died in May, 1791, left to the Society property to the amount of £1700 per annum. And, independently of that fund, applicable to the general support of the Chartered Schools, a sum of £1600 per annum, *English*, being the interest of £40,000 four per cents, was given to the Society by a person unknown, to be appropriated to the payment of apprentice fees, and for the salaries of catechists and ushers.

On the 5th of February, 1796, the Society again presented their annual petition, wherein they claim the support of the House, to enable

them to educate the children in *pure Christianity*. All inquiry seems to have gone to sleep; and on the very next day they were voted £13,000.

On the 3d of February, 1797, they petitioned, and on the 22d the House gave them £13,000. What a contrast is presented in this year, in an estimate for the support of the establishment at Maynooth College, presented to Parliament on the 24th of February, 1797, for the maintenance and education of fifty students, with the necessary masters, professors, officers, and servants, all full grown, making together about seventy persons. The whole expense for board, professors' salaries, books, &c. for one year, was only £2679. 15s. including the erection of various buildings.

On the 22d of January, 1798, the Society sent in their annual petition; and on the 7th February, 1798, they had the usual grant of £13,000. In this year, a Committee was appointed to inquire into the state of the different charitable institutions in Dublin, receiving the aid of Parliament. Much was done, and much exposed; but the rebellion interfered, and put an end to their exertions.

On the 8th of February, 1799, the petition of the Society was presented as usual. On that day, a Committee was appointed to inquire into

the state of the education of the lower orders of the people, and the means of improving the same; with power to send for papers, persons, and records, and to report their proceedings, with their opinion thereon, to the House. On the same day, a motion was agreed to, for an address to the Lord-Lieutenant for the Report of the Commissioners of Education, appointed under the 28th of the King. On the 23d of February the House voted £13,000 to the Chartered Schools; yet it was but the day before, that the Committee of Education, appointed on the 8th, had reported, That the state of education of the lower orders was highly defective, and required the interposition of the legislature: that the establishment of one or more schools in every parish, or union of parishes, in Ireland, would be useful; and that the payment of the masters should consist partly of a fixed salary, and partly of rewards, proportioned to their exertions.

On the 26th of February, leave was given to bring in a bill, grounded on the Report. The bill was brought in, and read a first time on the 28th of March, but the Union put a stop to its operation.

On the 7th Feb. 1800, the Society presented their last petition to the Irish Parliament; and on the 24th, the House voted their last grant of £13,000.

After the Union, the grants to the Chartered School Society became a matter of course; they were brought forward and provided for regularly by Parliament.

In 1801, the Imperial Parliament voted £18,213. 4s. 7d. British: and from that time, to 1817, inclusive, the annual grants have been as follows.

	£.	s.	d.
In 1801.....	18,213	4	7
1802.....	19,730	14	0
1803.....	21,062	16	2
1804.....	20,129	6	4
1805.....	22,621	6	1
1806.....	22,000	0	0
1807.....	23,270	0	0
1808.....	23,103	0	0
1809.....	26,003	0	0
1810.....	29,428	0	0
1811.....	39,787	0	0
1812.....	41,539	0	0
1813.....	41,539	0	0
1814.....	41,539	0	0
1815.....	41,539	0	0
1816.....	41,539	0	0
1817.....	39,000	0	0

£512,043 7 2 British.

Add 1-12th = 42,670 5 7 } to make it Irish
Currency.

£554,713 12 9

* I believe I am correct in this last grant; but the vote office not being open when I went to press, I had not the opportunity of verifying it.

I have now brought down the account of the Parliamentary Grants to the Chartered School Society to the present year. Who, on casting his eye over them, can refrain from lamenting the disproportionate benefit that has resulted from such vast means of accomplishing so great a national work: which, if the evidence of Howard is to be credited, has in a great measure failed in all its objects; which has neither promoted the Protestant cause, for which it was first instituted, nor materially advanced the education of the lower orders; but which, in the exhausted state of the finances of the Empire, has been draining it of immense sums from year to year! I trust that his Majesty's Ministers, who, I am persuaded, will never sanction the continuance of such abuses in these Schools, as the Report of 1788 exhibits, will interfere: and I hope there will be found public virtue sufficient in the Imperial Parliament, to institute an immediate inquiry into the real state of their affairs and management; and, if necessary, address the throne for a commission to issue for that purpose. Let the case be fairly and patiently investigated, and let any farther grants be suspended until the inquiry has been fully gone into, and the Report laid before Parliament. But I cannot help expressing some anxiety in reference to the parties by whom the inquiry shall be made. If the Commissioners of Edu-

cation in Ireland, several of whom are managers of the Chartered Schools, are to be referred to for a decision on this great national question, they will be constituted judges in their own cause, as to many individuals of them, so far as their management of these Schools, or their neglect of them, can operate to give them an interest in the inquiry, on the score of public character. To this, on the part of Ireland—to this, on the part of Britain—I must demur. Not that those Commissioners are not highly honourable men, but because their time is already too much occupied. And I should hope that, as honourable men, as men who have been no parties to these abuses, they will prove themselves too high-minded, too sincerely desirous of doing justice to their Country, to stand in the way of a thorough investigation; such as Parliament shall in its wisdom deem proper to institute.

CHAPTER VI.

ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE
CHARTERED SOCIETY'S SCHOOLS.

BUT I hear an advocate for the old system replying to all that has been adduced to prove the folly and inefficiency of the Chartered Schools, as a system of national education, and saying, It cannot be denied that abuses had crept in, and that much evil, which we regret as well as you, had been found in the management of the Establishment; but things are better ordered now. Great improvements have been made in the organization and internal regulations of the Schools; the masters and mistresses are better looked after; the morals, education, health, comfort, and every accommodation of the children, are more strictly attended to; and, were another inspection and investigation to take place, the Parliamentary Report would be just the reverse of that in 1788.

Were things actually as here represented, the managers of this Institution would then be exonerated from a load of responsibility and blame, from which, I fear, they cannot so easily relieve themselves. With such a heart-rending Report on the records of Parliament, as that of which I have given a copy,—a Report which has exhibited more of neglect and mismanagement, on the part

of those intrusted with the superintendence of those Schools, than I ever remember to have met with,—how, with such a record on their Journals, the Irish Parliament should go to sleep for thirteen years, and the Imperial Parliament for sixteen years, without any farther inquiry, I am at a loss to account for. Their conduct appears the more extraordinary, when we recollect, that they were year after year reminded of the subject, by the annual applications made to them by the Society, and the large and increasing grants they were called upon to vote for the support of these Schools:—notwithstanding which, I do not find that any thing has been done since 1788, either by the Irish or Imperial Parliament, in the way of real and practical inquiry into the management of the Chartered Schools*. With the view of ascertaining the

* Since the first edition went to press, I have been informed that in some instances much improvement has taken place in the management of these Schools. I am happy that such should have been the case; but I regret that such instances have been so few, and that they should have rather resulted from local or incidental circumstances, such as the integrity of the master or mistress, or the attention of individual visitors, than from a thorough and radical reform in the entire system of management, so loudly called for by the Report and evidence I have cited. And I feel persuaded that, on a parliamentary investigation taking place, there will appear much, very much, to censure and condemn, and consequently much to be reformed.

present and actual state of the Establishment, I shall give, what I believe will be found, a correct statement of their management at this present time. My business is with measures, not with men. *I am alone actuated by a concern for the national prosperity of Ireland, and an affectionate desire of promoting the temporal and eternal happiness of the children of the lower orders of my Irish fellow subjects.*

	£.	s.	d.
By the regulations of the Institution*, I find			
the master's salary is.....	12	0	0
Gratuity to ditto.....	8	0	0
Thirty acres of land for the use of the			
School, which has been worth £100,	60	0	0
now valued at			
Allowance for board of the master and			
his wife, at 2s. per day	36	10	0
Ditto for board of four servants, at 6½d.			
per day for each	39	10	0
Wages for ditto	20	0	0
Board of one usher	18	5	0
Ditto of sixty boys, at 4½d. per day for			
each	410	10	0
	£604	15	0

* I give this account only as an instance. Some Schools have less land than thirty acres attached to them; and the value must depend on its quality, and its relative distance from, or proximity to, a large market-town. In some cases, the master rents all the land (over a few acres for the use of the School), the amount of which goes in deduction from his income.

Add to these, house rent and taxes free; beds and bedding found; dairy and kitchen utensils, coals, candles, and soap, free; or else an allowance in money for their purchase; contracts for the supply of clothing for the children, stationery, &c.; and profit arising from the labour of the children; the master allowing the Society only 15s. per annum for each. The profit from this last item is said to be very considerable; and by placing so much land in the master's hands, he is made a farmer instead of a teacher, and the children labourers instead of scholars*. From all the information I have been able to collect, I should estimate the actual profits of a master to be from £300 to £600 per annum, according as the number of scholars varies from 60 up to 150. But the excessive profit to the master is not the chief evil; it is the abuse which the system admits of, from putting contracts in the hands of the master, and allowing him to farm the labour of the

* I would advise all the land, except ample play-grounds, and a few acres for potatoes and vegetables, and pasture for a cow or two for each School, to be let to proper persons, at its fair value; that the rents, added to the other funds of the Society, might enable the Committee to give adequate salaries at once to the masters; and instead of leasing the children's labour, let the produce of it go in premiums to the children themselves, according to their good behaviour, and progress in learning.

children, that is most to be deprecated: for it holds out a temptation to deceive, if not to absolute fraud; and that which should have been merely a comfortable subsistence for a country schoolmaster, is raised to so much emolument, as to enable him after a few years to retire on an income arising from undue accumulations.

If the master can but ingratiate himself with the boys, by indulging them in idle habits, he can half feed and half clothe them, which to a poor boy is no great privation, or it is patiently submitted to, for the sake of being excused attention to his book, or from corporal punishment. The master is only required, as I have been informed, to give the children flesh meat two days in the week, all the rest potatoes and milk; and if from fear, or from ignorance of their rights, the boys do not complain, they may be a whole year without tasting animal food. In the country parts of Ireland, boys and girls can be fed on such rations, on an average, for 2*d.* per day, or even less. A few acres of potatoes are sufficient for a whole school; and milk well watered, or butter-milk, would supply them for a mere trifle. A decent dress for Sundays, and not unfrequently without even that, will enable the master to let them go ragged and half naked the rest of the week. If the boys are indulged in idleness, as a bonus for being half fed and half

clothed, their education is thereby neglected, and their morals corrupted. If they are treated with severity, to deter them from complaining, they are tempted to run away and become vagabonds. No wonder, then, that so few remain to finish their education, and be bound out apprentice. In proof of the necessity of investigation as to the mode of conducting these Schools, and the persons employed in superintending them, I need only refer to what report states to have occurred within the last two years; namely, that a man of the name of N—l—n, one of the principal provincial travelling inspectors, was obliged to abscond to America, in consequence of his having debauched some of the girls in the Schools. Nay, I have heard a report, that a clergyman, resident in the north of Ireland, of the first respectability in the Established Church, who was appointed last summer to inspect the Chartered Schools, was obliged to alter his route, and proceed to a distant part of Ireland, to enter upon the investigation of a case of a still more aggravated nature; and so flagrant, that delicacy required him to leave his lady behind him on the road. If in answer to all this it should be said, that common rumour is of all liars the greatest; I have only to state, that, although I have heard both reports from a credible source, yet I shall

rejoice, and I am sure others will rejoice also, if the Committee of Fifteen shall be able to deny the truth of the first report, or satisfy Parliament and the Public, that the investigation of the latter case has proved the innocence of the party accused, and the good management of the School alluded to: or, that there was no necessity for the Rev. Mr. Th—ck—y altering his route, and going on the investigation; in a word, that both reports were wholly without foundation. But, if one or both should prove to be correct, and well founded in point of fact, how grievously distressing must it be to reflect, that at so recent a period of the alleged improvement in the system of these Schools, there should have been even one matron found, or employed, so negligent of the morals of these poor children, as to present opportunities for the perpetration of such a crime! How lamentable, in that case, to think, that, withdrawn from the roof and parental care of father and mother, and committed to the care of those who appear ill qualified for the discharge of so important a duty, any one of these poor children should have found a seducer where she ought to have found a protector: and under that roof, which should have been her asylum, and where she should have been trained up to

those virtues which adorn the female character in humble life, her unsuspecting heart should have been snared to her ruin, by a villain devoid of honour and truth.

CHAPTER VII.

REVIEW OF THE CHARTERED SCHOOL SOCIETY'S
OPERATIONS, CONTRASTED WITH THOSE OF
THE LONDON HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

IN the course of the hasty, but connected view which I have given of the rise and progress of the Chartered Schools, I have endeavoured to give a concise history of the origin of the Society; the objects which it embraced, the powers with which it was armed, the sources and amount of its income, and its progressive increase, with its disbursements; the mismanagement and abuse of the public funds* intrusted to its care, and its failure in the accomplishment of the objects for which it was incorporated, and for which the large grants I

* This subject assumes an increased importance, when it is recollected, that there are numerous other institutions, which are comparatively of little avail, as national establishments for education, and yet they draw a prodigious aggregate sum from the public purse. A renovated system is called for; an inquiry must be gone into. I would here entreat my readers to consult the Report of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland on the subject of Free Grammar Schools, laid before Parliament in the year 1812, where they will find instances of the most flagrant abuse of charitable funds, which loudly call for investigation and reformation.

have stated, were made; viz. the increase of Protestantism, and the extension of education. I have exhibited, in the Report of 1788, such a complication of misery in the treatment of the poor children, and such gross mismanagement and improper conduct on the part of most of the masters and mistresses, as has seldom, if ever, been exceeded in any similar national establishment. And I now respectfully call on the Committee of Fifteen to state to Parliament and to the British Empire, whether the masters are not still allowed to trade on the labour of the children for their own profit? as well as how far all or any of those evils which that Report details are yet continued. I have shewn, that after an expenditure of more than a million and a half sterling, Ireland, as far as the Chartered Schools are concerned, has been left nearly as they found her. More than half a century, the most important era of Ireland's history, has been lost to her, as it regards a national system of education; by which she has been prevented from holding on her march, in national improvement, with the other kingdoms of the British Empire. After seventy years' experience, what impression have the Chartered Schools made on the moral condition of Ireland? What portion of the moral wilderness has she enclosed and cultivated by means of this large expenditure? Where has the vine and the myrtle taken place of the bramble and the thorn? Who, ac-

quainted with Ireland, and the state of society there, does not deplore the want of education, by which generation after generation has been suffered to grow up and die in the grossest ignorance? And whilst the poor, in all the provinces of Ireland, have been sighing for the education of their children, this Society, whose funds have been sufficiently ample for the instruction of two hundred thousand children annually, on a plan of daily schools, have been expending all on thirty-three schools, and little more than two thousand children! Who does not see the necessity of a change of the whole system?

The annual returns of the Society, as printed in the Dublin Directories, do not inform us how many children entered or left the school in each successive year*. There is one fact, however, which proves

* The want of this most important document keeps the public completely in the dark as to the total number that have entered since its commencement. Yet, notwithstanding this chasm, and even supposing that a reform really took place in 1788 in the management of the Schools from that time, can it be denied, if the records of Parliament are to be credited, that it was a very common practice for the master to keep the scholars in the schools until they were 17 or 18 years of age, without any education, and merely for the profit of their labour? From this and other circumstances I have noticed, am I not justified in concluding, that but few children, comparatively, have, after all, left the Schools with credit or advantage, during such a long series of years?

the very partial influence of the Society on the morals and domestic happiness of Ireland. By the Society's statement in 1816, since the commencement of their Schools, only 942, I believe, have received the marriage portion. A small proportion indeed, out of all who have entered and left the Schools, during a term of seventy years.

Among other causes of this great deficiency, it may possibly be alleged, that the great proportion of the scholars who married, united themselves to Catholics, and thereby forfeited their claim: but then I would ask, where is the proposed and boasted conversion of the children of Catholics to Protestantism by means of these Schools?

Another proof of the great failure of these Schools, in reference to the promotion of good morals, which speaks a volume, is, that in the returns of the Committee of Fifteen, printed annually, they do not, that I can see, furnish the public with one solitary instance of a boy or girl having, in the course of seventy years, received the reward for good behaviour during their apprenticeship. It is scarcely to be believed, but that some, at least, out of so many, and for such a number of years, must have merited and obtained this gratuity; and it might have been expected that the Committee would, (as in the case of the number married,) for the satisfaction of the public, have also given the number of those who, in seventy years, had served their ap-

prenticeship creditably. In the investigation of this subject, and by an attention to the statements of the Society, it will appear, as I think I have shewn, that the extent of their operations bore no proportion to their increase of funds. In the early years of the Institution, with very limited funds, and before they received the aid of Parliament, they did better. In the year 1745, on their first application to the Irish Commons for assistance, at a time when they had only the royal bounty of £1000 a year, in addition to private liberality, to depend on; they report, that they had built twenty-two schools, and furnished them for the masters' families, servants, and children, and were supporting five hundred and eleven boys and girls, and had apprenticed two hundred and ninety-four children.

It will be seen by an attention to the different Reports in succession, that in the earlier times of their parliamentary grants, and when these were only biennial, far more children were educated in proportion to their income, than has been done since. From the year 1745 up to the Union, the Irish Parliament granted no less a sum than £347,500 to the Chartered School Society; and above £150,000 of this, whilst the appalling Report of 1788 was on the Journals of the Irish House of Commons.

It might justly have been expected, that in the Imperial Parliament, the interests of Ireland would have been attended to. That, whatever had been

carried in the sister kingdom, through political intrigue or courtly influence, during the early and middle stages of the last century, yet that the enlightened, independent, and upright members of the Imperial House of Commons would have seen to the faithful and discreet expenditure of the public money. I am sure they intended that strict justice should be done to Ireland, and the utmost liberality extended to her public Institutions, intrusted to their protection; yet it will, I fear, be scarcely credited, (except by a reference to the yearly grants,) that in the course of seventeen years, the Imperial Parliament, as a matter of course, without any public inquiry, that I am aware of, and without any increase of schools, have expended the enormous sum of £554,000, and upwards; a sum larger, by £200,000, than was granted by the Irish Parliament during a space of forty-six years, when very considerable sums were expended on buildings and furniture, and a greater number of schools supported by the Institution. If the present waste of the public money, on a scale of education small and unproductive, be persisted in, no wonder if the finances of the Country be embarrassed. Here is a sum granted by Parliament, to the amount of £41,539 annually, for thirty-three Chartered Schools; and all this, independent of the large income enjoyed by the Society from estates, public government funds, &c. &c. &c.

which may be safely estimated at a sum not less than from £10,000 up to £20,000, making an aggregate of £61,000 per annum.

And I would ask, What correspondent good has been done by this vast sum, for the improvement of Ireland? Let the Committee of Fifteen answer this question, if they can. I ask, What great moral or political benefit has accrued to Ireland, or to the British Empire, which now contributes to this vast expenditure, from these Chartered Schools, as an apology for a national system of education for the poor of Ireland?

But had it been otherwise; had it appeared in the course of this inquiry, that the plan was good as far as it went; that the funds, private and parliamentary, had been honestly, discreetly, and economically expended; that the children were well fed, well clothed, well lodged, not over-worked, and their education good; that a stranger could not visit any of the schools, without seeing peace, plenty, health, and comfort, written in legible characters on their chubby cheeks; that all the boys and girls turned out *Protestants*, and had grown up good, virtuous, and useful men and women: if all this, and much more, had been the result of the Chartered School scheme, my objections to the system would, in the late and present state of education in Ireland, have been still insurmountable.

Were there at this time a general dearth of the necessaries of life in Ireland, and, through the private liberality of individuals and the bounty of Parliament, a fund of £60,000 was annually collected, expressly for the maintenance of poor *starving* children throughout the kingdom, during the time of famine, what would be thought of those to whom the funds were intrusted, when it was understood, that instead of extending relief generally, they had selected two thousand children, and built houses for their reception at a great expense; that they gave large salaries to officers, and to masters, for superintending the children; and that they spent more money on buildings, officers, and others connected with the establishment, than would feed the two thousand children?

Large establishments, buildings, and permanent support for the children, are not essential to a plan of rendering education general and efficient. They clog the machine, exhaust the funds, and lead to a thousand evils.

Educate the children young: and what although they be a little ragged? they will soon get the better of that, as they advance in learning and in habits of cleanliness.

It will be asked, What do you recommend for Ireland, instead of Chartered Schools? I answer, Well organized and well-conducted day-schools. Every thing is favourable to the extension of education

among the poor in Ireland. The Catholics are every where seeking for the instruction of their children, and nothing can overcome it. I find these poor people uneasy and restless under their restraints, and anxious to be delivered; and in many instances an open resistance to the arbitrary mandates of the priest has taken place, especially when exerted to prevent their children's education in schools not under his control. Let instruction be afforded, and then the beams of intellectual freedom will penetrate the darkest recesses of papal superstition. Already have the chains which pressed down both body and mind, fallen off from many; and it is only for the friends of religion and education to persevere in a wise, efficient, and conciliatory course; and, twenty years hence, Ireland will no longer be held up in disgraceful contrast with Scotland, but exhibit a land of industry, knowledge, peace, and virtue. We must, however, keep in mind, that it is by slow degrees that national improvements, either in arts and sciences, or in knowledge, are effected. We cannot expect to change a Catholic population in a day. Let individuals, let societies, let the legislature go forward in this way, and success will certainly follow. Raise them to the rank of men, and of freemen, and you will do much towards bursting the fetters of priestly influence; those fetters which have been so long strengthened and continued by the civil restrictions

under which they were placed ; in a word, you will make Ireland united and happy.

I have before stated my objections to the Chartered School system at considerable length ; accompanied, I hope, with such evidence, as to convince the most prejudiced that they ought no longer to be persisted in. I now proceed to describe the kind of Schools which I would recommend, instead of the boarding and clothing plan. In doing this, I am happy in being able to refer my readers to an extensive and continued experiment, which has been carrying on for years in the west of Ireland, under the care, and at the expense, of the London Hibernian Society, for Schools, and for the circulation of the Scriptures*. This Society has now three hundred and forty-seven Schools, in which are above twenty-seven thousand Catholic and Protestant children, receiving daily instruction, and exhibiting such proofs of the excellency and success of the plan, as must convince all who are acquainted with it. A plan which must recommend itself by its great simplicity, united with efficiency. In the plan of these Schools, there is nothing calculated in the slightest degree to clash with the religious peculiarities of the Catholics. They are open to all religious persuasions. The only books used in them are

* For farther particulars of this Society, see Appendix.

Spelling-books, with Scripture lessons, and the New Testament.

The children, as they advance in reading, are expected to commit to memory a certain portion of the Scriptures, which they cheerfully do, and in many cases greatly exceed the requisite task. You may meet with many little ragged boys and girls, who can repeat thirty, and even forty chapters, with great correctness.

There are no catechisms allowed in the Schools. The children who can read the Testament, are permitted to carry it home every evening to read to their parents and neighbours. And it is no uncommon sight to see the cabin full, and persons standing round the door listening with attention and wonder to the word of God, which is read by the child, to the no small delight of his parents. In this simple and inoffensive way have thousands of Testaments found their admission into the cabins of the Catholics; and by the silent, but efficacious operation of the truth on the heart, under the divine blessing, many, very many have not only been brought over from the errors of Popery, but have become sincere Christians.

I can refer to the testimony of a most respectable clergyman of the Church of Ireland, who attributes the great increase in the number of hearers in his church, to the beneficial effects of these

schools in his parish and neighbourhood. This will invariably be the case as knowledge increases ; and the churches, which have been almost without hearers hitherto, will be well attended.

What a contrast do the London Hibernian Society's Schools exhibit to those of the Chartered Society, in regard to the appearance of the children ! Look at the poor puny little beings you meet with in general in the one, often squalid, ragged, and without animal spirits ; and then go to the day-schools of the other, where, if the children be but indifferently clothed, you will find them with their faces clean, their heads combed, and themselves active and noisy at their play. And I can assure the reader, that the desire in the mother and father that little Paddy should make as good an appearance at school as his neighbours, has led them to practise habits of industry and frugality, which they would not otherwise have submitted to. Another striking difference between the two systems is in respect of Catholic prejudices. The professed original object of the Chartered Schools was not so much for the instruction of the children, as for proselyting to Protestantism. This, together with the harsh measures adopted in order thereto, gave the Catholics, as might have been expected, a fixed and deep-rooted aversion to the very name of Chartered Schools. On the contrary,

in these day-schools, a plan of education, solid and useful, but simple and liberal, has been provided, which requires no compromise of principle in a Catholic who accepts it.

The great object with the London Hibernian Schools Society, was to implant early in the infant mind the seeds of knowledge and virtue, drawn from the Sacred Scriptures ; to train them up to an acquaintance with their duty to their parents, and to each other ; to fear God, and honour the king. The result has abundantly proved the wisdom and the success of the plan. Thousands, I may say tens of thousands, of Catholic children have been brought by their parents for admission ; and, in a multitude of instances, they have withdrawn them from schools kept by Catholic masters, because of the superior education to be obtained in the Society's Schools ; and this not unfrequently at the risk of the priest's displeasure, of being refused confession, yea, of excommunication ! But so great is the confidence of the Catholics in the London Hibernian Society's Schools, and so convinced are they of their superiority over the Catholic Schools, that they are prepared to run all risks, rather than take their children away.

Another proof of the high approbation of these Schools by the Catholics is, that in a variety of instances they are held, by permission of the priests, in their chapels : I have even known the

priest attending, to hear the children repeat the portions of Scripture which they had committed to memory: and I must speak it to the praise of one Catholic prelate, and of many of the priests, who have countenanced and commended these Free Schools. And I take this opportunity of expressing my conviction of the growing liberality of the Roman clergy of Ireland. This may be expected in the present state of society in the British Empire. The spirit and principles of the Church of Rome are the same as in the days of Queen Mary; but public opinion is against her in many things, and particularly in regard to the circulation of the Scriptures and education of the poor: and notwithstanding the bulls of popes, they must either yield in some measure, or risk their influence over the people, with the loss of the good opinion of the liberal and humane.

Some years since, the Society was at a loss for Irish teachers. When they commenced Irish classes in those districts where the English language is but little known, they were under the necessity of employing Catholic masters. When the idea was first suggested to the Committee, it excited a little alarm. They felt a hesitation in committing the instruction of the children to a Catholic. But, on farther consideration of the subject, they saw no objection, as no books were

allowed in the Schools except the Spelling-books and New Testament.

The Society has employed such as were competent; and I am happy in being able to declare, that, after many years' experience, there has nothing arisen to make them regret their decision. I am also able to state, that not a few of them, who came into the service of the Society bigoted Catholics, have, through the reading of the Scriptures, renounced the errors of Popery, and become consistent and decided Protestants.

The poor Catholic population had for years, before this Society began its operations, been preparing for it, by an universal anxiety for the education of their children. They had discovered that the want of this was one great cause of their degraded condition. This gave rise to a great increase of Schools throughout the kingdom. But, alas! it was any thing but education. The whole plan of what they dignified with that name, had a direct tendency to debase, instead of enlarging and elevating the mind; to bind more securely the infant conscience in the chains of priestly domination; to corrupt the hearts of the children, by the reading of such books as histories of the Irish Rapparees and Rogues, the Adventures of Captain Frene, Impartial History of Ireland, and the Treatise of the Scapular; to raise in them an admiration of lawless,

profligate, and successful adventure; to cherish superstition, and become the nurseries of disloyalty and rebellion. In these Schools, the Holy Scriptures were never suffered to enter. That Sacred Word, the entrance of which giveth light, whose heavenly doctrines elevate and purify the soul, whose holy precepts inculcate every relative and social duty; that holy book, which ought invariably to form the basis of useful instruction for the poor, was proscribed!

And it was no extraordinary thing to see a large number of children collected together in what *they called a school*, and not a book used, nor any taught to read. The children were employed in committing to memory portions of the Summary of Christian Doctrine and the Catechism, as they were given out by the priest, or master, that they might be early versed in all the peculiarities of the Romish faith and worship. The good sense of the poor parents, a large portion of which is generally found among the common people of Ireland, soon perceived that this was not education. Happily for them, at this time the London Hibernian Society commenced her operations; and as her schools increased, those hot-beds of disaffection, superstition, and vice, were demolished.

Another thing, which favoured the Society's Schools, was their being free. The great poverty of the lower Irish made it difficult for them

to pay the weekly charges of the other Schools, and compelled them often to send but one out of a family, when the parents were desirous that all should enjoy it. The use of books, though restricted to the Spelling-books and Testaments, gratified them; and the possession of the latter, which they could call their own, had a wonderful effect both on parents and children.

The manifest disinterestedness and kindness of the Society's plan, made a deep and favourable impression on their minds, notwithstanding the suspicions which were circulated by the enemies of education, charging the Society with having a design to kidnap the children for soldiers.

There is another and a delightful view of the success attending the London Hibernian Society's Schools, in their moral and civilizing influence on the districts where they are planted. This has been felt in various ways, and became so visible, that persons visiting the places where the schools are in operation, and who knew the former character of the villages, were induced to ascertain the cause. We have seen a family, whose cabin, before they sent their children to the school, was a scene of violence, drunkenness, and swearing. They neither feared God, nor regarded man. The whole family were in rags; wretchedness was written on every thing. Extend this through the village. What a scene has

it often presented ! nothing but riot and confusion. Now, what a change ! the children, who were "as the wild ass's colt," are sent to School, where, under a mild discipline, they improve in their manners. In due time, they are able to read the New Testament: this is carried home to the Catholic cabin, and unfolds to the view of the astonished parents a new world. The little boy continues to read in the evening to the family, and any neighbours who choose to attend : an influence is felt, an effect is produced, an improvement of character is visible. Some are, by the blessing of God, brought out of darkness into his marvellous light ; on others, a great moral change takes place ; and, more or less, benefits are communicated to all. The village has become as noted for peace and good order, as before for riot. The parents are better clothed, the children more decent, their dwellings more cleanly ; they appear a new race. They feel their elevation : they have now a character, which is one of the surest pledges the Government can have for their future orderly conduct. I could particularize many, who with tears of gratitude are ready to acknowledge, that, under God, all their comfort and improvement have been owing to the Schools of the London Hibernian Society, and to that blessed Book which was thus brought to them. Before this, say they, our earnings were not half enough for our spendings ; now

we are able to provide for our families comfortably.

These Schools have also achieved much, in removing that anti-British feeling which has been so fruitful of misery to Ireland. That which has been the chief engine in the hands of the leaders of rebellion, and has more than once shaken the English Government there to its very foundation, is now happily dying away in those districts where the Schools abound. Taught from their infancy to consider it impossible for an Englishman to seek the good of Ireland, they have been jealous of him; and truly they have had much to justify this. But now they see, by the large sums gratuitously expended by them on the education of their children, by the kind and liberal way in which their religious prejudices are met, that it is truly their good, and their good *only*, which is aimed at in all.

Another very important effect has been accomplished in some good measure through these schools. By the promiscuous admission of Catholic and Protestant children into the same School, mixing together in the same class, and at their play, much of that religious rancour, which has unhappily been mutual in Ireland, is thus decreasing. What rivers of blood have been shed through this unchristian, ungodly spirit.

Another most important benefit has been conferred on the Country by the operation of the

London Hibernian Society's Schools; a great change is visible, in reference to public order and peace. These districts form a very striking contrast with those, where such Schools have not been planted. In the late disturbed state of Ireland, these counties were quiet, notwithstanding great pains had been taken by the enemies of Government to induce them openly to abet the cause of disaffection. Were this simple but efficient plan carried forward, what a saving of expense would it produce to the Country! I have no doubt that, could education be made general, the whole face of the population would be changed in a few years. The cabin and the mansion would be alike safe from the attack of the lawless banditti—the laws cheerfully submitted to—the cheering title of neighbour and brother would be realized—industry and peace would universally prevail, and Ireland would be happy. Instead of having to keep up a standing army of twenty thousand soldiers for the preservation of public peace in Ireland, they might be dispensed with, and in one way and another there might be, by such means, one million at least saved annually to the Country.

Thus, by the extension of these Schools, and the circulation of the Scriptures throughout the whole of Ireland, a great moral revolution will be effected. Had not the London Hibernian Society been circumscribed, through the deficiency

of funds, they could have counted, at this time, *one thousand Schools, and one hundred thousand children under instruction.*

What a striking contrast do these Schools also furnish to the Chartered School system, in reference to the extent of their operations and the number of children! Three hundred and forty Schools, and above twenty-seven thousand children and adults, receiving a substantial and useful education, for little more than one-fifteenth part of what is expended on only two thousand five hundred children!

The London Hibernian Society exhibits, what may be reckoned a prodigy in Ireland, a public charity, whose operations and efficiency are in full proportion to its expenditure. Her funds are so economically expended, that each scholar does not cost more than about four shillings for his year's education.

There is another most important benefit conferred on Ireland, through the London Hibernian Society's Schools. It would have been very difficult for the British and Foreign Bible Society to have carried on its operations in Ireland to any great extent, for some years, amongst the Catholics*, had not this Society afforded her faci-

* Since going to press with the first edition, I am sorry to learn, that some Popish assemblages of Priests in Ireland have shewn the cloven foot. In the course of this inquiry, I have been desirous, candidly, to record some of the instances of

lities. In consequence of the children who were in the Testament classes being furnished with the Scriptures, and permitted to carry them home with them after school hours, a sure and certain channel was provided for a very extensive circulation: and so attached are the children, as well as the parents, to the Scriptures, that it would put the influence of the priest to considerable hazard, were he to insist on their delivering them up to him. An instance once occurred, confirmatory of this. In the neighbourhood of one school, the priest had threatened to deprive them of their New Testaments: an alarm was given; and the children, expecting the entrance of the priest to execute his threat, all rushed out of school and ran home, carrying their Testaments with them.

liberality on the part of the catholic clergy, which had come to my knowledge, also some cases of the reverse. I am a friend to the civil and religious privileges of all classes, but I never will shrink from opposing popery, priestcraft, and ecclesiastical tyranny. And whenever any individuals or bodies of men, whether clergy, or laity, shall oppose the formation and progress of Bible Societies, and the free and unrestrained circulation of the Scriptures among the poor; let them belong to whatever church they may, I shall not hesitate to class them among the adherents and friends of Antichrist.

CHAPTER VIII.

REMARKS ON THE SOCIETY IN DUBLIN FOR
THE EDUCATION OF THE POOR.

IN the year 1811, an association was formed in Dublin, under the title of A SOCIETY FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE POOR OF IRELAND. The Patrons, Patronesses, President, Vice-Presidents, and Auditors, are almost all noblemen. The Committee is composed of the most respectable and worthy men that Ireland can produce. Some of them I have the honour of knowing personally. In this Society, there has been no jobbing; no squandering of funds on unnecessary offices; no bonus to a master, or inspector, to oblige some great man in the neighbourhood of the schools; all has been fair so far. Nothing but a sense of duty, of zeal for the honour and prosperity of Ireland, and a desire of pointing out what I conceive an error in their plans and measures, would have induced me to introduce so honourable a band in such company as the Chartered Schools. And before I point out what I conceive to be an error, I am free to confess, that I believe it has arisen purely from their having been educated in a bad school; from their being accustomed to see

the public money profusely squandered on spacious and costly buildings ; and from an idea, that every thing connected with Ireland must be carried on in a magnificent style.

The object of this Society is good ; it is *the Education of the Poor of Ireland* : but I am sorry, in the present state of that Country, to see the Committee confining itself to the assisting of schools with books and slates, and the training of a few masters, instead of planting schools in those parts of Ireland which are still destitute of education. Unless this had been a part of their plan, I can see no occasion for the existence of the Society.

When I observe the rank, titles, wealth, and influence of the great personages who patronize this Society, how great is my surprise to see the paltry amount of *subscriptions for one year, only £68. 9s. 6d. for the education of the poor of Ireland!* I conclude, from the absence of some of the names of the *higher officers* from the list of subscribers, that the word *patronage* means another thing in Ireland from what it does in this country. No wonder that we hear the Committee addressing the Country in a very desponding tone, and lamenting over the disgraceful apathy that prevails, and the deplorable indifference to the education of the poor, which is acknowledged to be of vital importance to Ireland. Where is public spirit? When will the wealthy and ennobled among *Irishmen* be ashamed

to see every body feeling for Ireland's disgrace but themselves?

Whilst I am thus addressing Irishmen, I have an excuse, in part, to offer for the little that is done in Ireland for these Societies by way of subscription. It is in a great measure owing to the paralyzing tendency of all Parliamentary grants. I cannot for a moment suppose that Irishmen would be behind Englishmen in this respect, had they not for many years been accustomed to see all their great public institutions carried on without their aid. Add to this, the great and glaring abuses which notoriously exist in the best of them. This Society having received two Parliamentary grants; one for £6,980, and the other for £6,000, must bid adieu to any very efficient subscriptions, unless a revolution takes place in the Irish habits.

What I have chiefly to complain of in the operations of this Society, is the improvident way in which the public money has been expended. They have laid out nearly £9,000 in building and furnishing what they call a MODEL School, in Kildare Street, Dublin.

This school-house is fitted for the reception of five hundred boys, and the like number of girls. They have laid out about three-fourths of the whole of their funds in providing a school-room, and a place of meeting for the Committee. Is it necessary to inform this Committee, how few towns there are

in Ireland, where one thousand children can be collected? Must they be told, that the scattered population of the country will, nine times out of ten, only require a school-room fit to contain from sixty to one hundred children? Is it necessary, therefore, to expend so much to furnish a model for that, which can be built in the glens and bogs at an expense of from £30 to £40? This seems just as reasonable as if a grant were given by Parliament to a Society for bettering the condition of the poor of Ireland; and the Committee, to whom the grant was made, should say to their countrymen: Your cabins are very small, inconvenient, and dirty; and they are, moreover, a reproach to our Country; we wish you to build better, and shall give you a model cabin: and this Committee should employ an architect to furnish a drawing of the Castle of Dublin, with an estimate of the masons', carpenters', painters', plumbers', &c. charge for erecting the same. I believe the good sense of the people would very soon furnish a reply. Let the poor people have but education, and they will be at no loss for a school-room. They will accept of instruction, if it be under a hedge* ; and

* In fine weather, you may often see a schoolmaster taking his boys from the confined air of his cabin, and planting them along the hedge, under shelter from the heat of the sun, where he goes on teaching them reading, spelling, and cyphering; and then returning to the cabin to teach the writing-class.

they will, even in these circumstances, accept it gratefully. But they tell us, this fine building is intended for the training of masters. It is true, the intended masters may do very well to superintend schools in a few large and populous towns, where good salaries can be obtained ; but they will, from the circumstance of their being trained in the metropolis, with metropolitan habits, and especially at a seminary where economy, so fundamental a principle in the education of the poor, is overlooked, be altogether unsuitable for taking charge of a country school, where a salary of from £15 to £25 only can be afforded.

Neither does there appear any necessity for this school as a model, in reference to the mode of instruction, seeing there has been for some years a large school in Dublin, on the plan of the British system, more than sufficient for all the purposes for which this great expense has been incurred.

We have here another instance of the improvidence of Parliament, in voting no less a sum than £12,980 to a Society, however respectable, which had done nothing to entitle it to such a grant ; a Society which, after four years' operation, had only collected a few hundred pounds, had voted some slates and pencils, and given instruction to a few masters.

It appears that one of the grants from Parlia-

ment to this Society was professedly for the purpose of distributing tracts and religious books throughout Ireland. With all my respect for this Society, I must declare, that it was a very unjustifiable measure in Parliament to grant the public money for such a purpose as this. Have we any security that none of these shall be of a political, or moral political kind? that they shall not interfere with the religious opinions of any of the different classes of Christians in Ireland? In that Country especially, is much caution and circumspection necessary. What ordeal are they to pass before circulation? This measure involves very serious consequences, and, judging from the zeal of certain persons, I feel a little jealous, lest the operation of this grant should tend more to the awakening of religious and political animosities, than the allaying them. I am satisfied that a Society for general education in Ireland could not do any thing more effectually to counteract their success, than by becoming the distributors of tracts. The collision of religious and political opinions being extreme, it must consequently be very difficult to write on those topics without giving offence. Simplicity and economy are essential to the success of any great plan for the education of the poor. I am anxious that the very respectable and honourable Committee of the Society for the Education of the Poor of Ireland should be convinced, that expensive

and elegant buildings are not necessary to the instruction of the poor. The interest of the money expended on their school-rooms would educate nearly two thousand children annually, on the plan of day schools for education alone: and expensive houses always lead the masters to expect a salary corresponding with the size and elegance of the building. Let every penny be spared, that education may be extended to the utmost.

CHAPTER IX.

PARISH SCHOOLS IN IRELAND.

PARISH Schools, for the education of the poor of Ireland, are of very ancient date. By the 28th of Henry the Eighth, it was enacted, that there should be a school in each parish throughout the kingdom; and every clergyman receiving a benefice was obliged to take the following oath: "*That he shall keepe, or cause to be kept, within the place, terretorie, or paroch, where he shall have rule, benefice, or promotion, a schoole for to learne English,*" &c. And any bishop or suffragan neglecting to administer such oath, was made liable to a fine of £3. 6s. 8d.

This law is still in force*. By a subsequent statute, bishops, &c. were authorized to grant small parcels of land in aid of these schools.

If it be admitted that the education of the rising generation is a most important measure; that the true prosperity of a nation must depend upon it; that no kingdom can be truly great

* It has been recommended, from high authority, to repeal this wholesome law. If the poor do not need instruction, and if teaching them to read their Bibles is not a good thing, then repeal it: if otherwise, enforce it.

without the diffusion of useful knowledge throughout the mass of the people ; that it is Christianity which has elevated Britain : it becomes the duty of those who are intrusted with this great work, to take care that a sound and scriptural education be provided for the poor, who form so large a proportion of our population. This important trust was confided very naturally to the ministers of religion ; how it has been discharged, let the history of Irish Parish Schools declare.

It is painful to be obliged to state, that notwithstanding their solemn and deliberate appeal to Almighty God, in their engagement to keep, or cause to be kept, a school in their parish, a very small proportion of the parishes of Ireland have been favoured with this description of schools*. Thus generation after generation has been left in a state of gross ignorance. Incumbents after incumbents have succeeded : they have received the temporalities of the parish ; but they have, as a body, done little to disperse the moral gloom which has so long enveloped Ireland. Happily there are many exceptions.

This is not surprising, when we find so many of the parishes without a church, without any

* By the last return to the Commissioners in 1810, it appeared, that a great proportion of parishes had no school of this description.

place wherein to perform the public worship of Almighty God. Thus the sacred appointment of the office of a parish minister, in a multitude of instances, has become little else than a sinecure; and his neglect of duty is excused on that account.—I speak of Rectors and Pluralists.—Thus many, very many parishes, have been left, age after age, without ministerial instruction, and no alternative but to live without any attention to the public worship of God, or to find their way to the Popish chapel. Are we then to wonder that such a *defection* from the Established Church should have taken place in respect to the Protestant population of Ireland, within these last fifty years, and such an accession of numbers to the *Romish faith*? It is an appalling reflection, that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-subjects should have been left, year after year, to wander through the mazes of error, to grow up destitute of moral and religious instruction, and thereby become thorns in the eyes of Government, instead of the glory and bulwark of the throne.

What an accumulation of moral and political evil has this neglect produced to Ireland? Whilst we have in England a church in each parish, the Scriptures read, and the excellent form of prayers in use, a standard is lifted up against ignorance and vice. But in how many parishes in Ireland

has the sweet sound of the church-going bell never been heard ! No crowds of peasantry, from the different quarters of the parish, directing their steps on the day of sacred rest towards that place, where they should have found solace under the unavoidable evils of this present life ; where they should have heard peace and good-will towards all men inculcated ; where they should have been instructed to fear God and honour the King ; where their erring feet should have been guided to that Saviour, through whose obedience unto death, alone, is a pathway opened to immortal life and glory ! Through the want of these, the inhabitants of those parishes have been left to sink deeper and deeper in ignorance, a prey to lawless and unrestrained passions, which have grown rank, where the social virtues should have flourished. Exposed to the designs of turbulent and disloyal men, instead of being a rampart of brass round the throne, they have often shaken it to its very base. We hear a cry loud enough of NO POPERY, whenever our fellow-subjects of that communion approach Parliament on the question of their civil rights ; but what has been done by the accredited ministers of religion, in a kind and liberal way, to bring them out of their ignorance and error ? What have they done in regard to the education of the poor ? If schools have been instituted, has the plan been

such as to offer nothing repulsive to the Catholic parent? Have the Scriptures been circulated plentifully through the cabins of the poor?

The number of Parish Schools has certainly of late increased in Ireland; which is chiefly owing to an institution for the tuition of schoolmasters, under the superintendence of a worthy and zealous clergyman at Kildimo.

This seminary has for some years furnished a considerable number of masters, well qualified for the office of parish clerk, and parish schoolmaster; in which twofold office they are frequently employed. This union of services may do very well in the Protestant districts; but it is a real prejudice in parishes where the population is chiefly Catholic. All who are acquainted with Ireland, are aware of the extreme jealousy of the Catholics towards any plan wherein the Protestant parish minister has the chief control. This will apply still more strongly to such schools as are kept in the church or its neighbourhood: and stronger still, if taught by the parish clerk. They cannot help associating the idea of proselyting with all these, and are thereby prevented from sending their children to the parish school.

The uniform opposition of most of the clergy of Ireland to the Catholic claims, their outcry against every attempt to ameliorate their political and ecclesiastical condition; the many bitter re-

flections cast upon their creed and ritual; all concur in strengthening the prejudices of men, who have long felt their civil degradation, and who will not easily be brought to believe, that in the invitation of their children to the parish school a benefit is intended.

There is another thing connected with parish schools, which must prevent their being extensively useful; namely, the high charge made for the instruction of each child.

I believe two shillings and sixpence per quarter is the lowest price generally demanded, and often it is as high as eleven shillings. The lowest of these sums to a poor man, with five or six children who need education, is more than he can spare; and he is, therefore, compelled to let his children grow up uneducated, how much soever he is anxious for it, unless he can find it in another way. On these and other accounts it will be found, that but a small proportion of the children of Catholics is sent to the parish schools; consequently, this class can do but little to meet the present exigence of Ireland. In the depressed state of the Catholic poor, it is essential to any national plan of education that it be free from every thing which can be construed into an attempt to proselyte; that it be calculated to induce confidence on the part of the Catholic; that it be gratuitous, or, at least for the present,

that it be optional on the part of the parents to pay or not, as they are able, for the instruction of their children.

Let education go forward and become general, and I have no doubt but *that honest industry*, which education and knowledge stimulate, will, in a few years, enable the poorest Irish parents cheerfully to pay for the schooling of their children: and, being once able, I know too well the noble independence of the Irish character, even among the poorest, to believe they will accept that as a charity which they feel themselves able to pay for. And thus, in a few years, the Country will in a great degree be relieved from the expense of educating the poor, and may safely, as in Scotland, leave it with the people themselves.

Although Parish Schools, according to their present constitution, can be but of little benefit to the Catholic poor, there is, nevertheless, another class to which they may be of great advantage. The nominal Protestant, in the Popish districts, is in general in no better condition, as to education, than the Catholic; and in some respects even below him. Having no parish church to attend, observing no difference between the Sunday and another day, living like an heathen, are we to wonder that his children should

grow up as ignorant of God as those of the Hindoo, or the Hottentot?

These are the more immediate objects of Parish Schools; and for their sakes I shall be glad to see the humane and wholesome laws of Henry and others strictly enforced.

CHAPTER X.

ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT, ON THE NECESSITY
OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF
THE CHARTERED SCHOOLS.

I WOULD now address myself most respectfully to Parliament on the important subject of the education of the poor of Ireland. This is a subject which involves the moral and political prosperity of the empire, and the happiness of millions; a subject which therefore cannot fail to awaken an interest in the bosoms of the members of the Commons House, as Men, as Britons, as Christians, and as the Representatives of the people in this great Empire. My chief fear is, lest so weighty and momentous a subject should suffer from the feeble, unimpressive, and indistinct manner in which it is brought forward.

There are various circumstances which render it the imperious duty of Parliament, at the present time, to go into the inquiry I am about to recommend. The alarming state of the finances of the Country, and the necessity of the strictest economy; the unexampled depression of the poor, and its consequent effects on the morals of that large and essen-

tial part of the community; all prove the necessity of a good, plain, and useful system of education for the common people, to elevate them from their gross ignorance; lest, being left without the knowledge of their duty to their families, to their neighbours, to God, and to their Country, they should, in the hands of artful, ambitious, and disloyal men, be made the instruments of involving these countries in all the horrors of civil strife.

But if, after all, I should unhappily fail in awakening attention to this great and national object, I shall have the satisfaction of having thrown in my mite towards the moral and political regeneration of Ireland.

That the Chartered School plan of education has in a great measure failed of accomplishing that object, I think there can be no doubt remaining on the mind of every impartial reader. And whilst I regret the prodigal waste of funds, sufficient for the education of all the poor of Ireland, I rejoice that there is every prospect of the Legislature attending to the humblest effort to prevent the recurrence of these evils for the future.

I need not say a word on the duty of Parliament not to vote away another shilling to the Chartered Schools, until a rigid investigation shall have taken place; because I feel confident that they will in their wisdom adopt such an investigation without delay.

That it will become Parliament to institute a very minute inquiry into the arcana of the Chartered School Society, there can, I should think, remain no doubt. Here I am prepared to meet considerable opposition; or, if not, an attempt will probably be made to give the investigation such a direction as to defeat its object.

An inquiry by a Committee may be resisted by some, on the ground of there being no necessity for such a course, as the control is already in the hands of honourable and intelligent men, who are appointed Commissioners of Education in Ireland, and who have powers sufficient for all that can be proposed by the appointment of a Committee. Every man has an answer ready for this objection. If they have power, and have not exercised it, because of the weight of business pressing upon them, it will be for the wisdom of Parliament to relieve them in part, and to place the investigation of this vital branch of the case of Ireland in other hands. And here permit me to express my great respect for the Irish Commissioners of Education, whose rank and character deservedly place them above all suspicion. Had they believed that the Chartered Schools were such as I fear a large proportion of them will be found to be, I am persuaded they would not have suffered the system to continue for a single day. I hope, therefore, to see them among the foremost

to support the measure, and to assist the Committee in all its future operations.

I hope I shall be excused, if I state a few of the points, which it will be necessary for the Committee to pay particular attention to, in the investigation.

They should inquire, how much of the public grants, and other funds of the Corporation, have been annually expended on each child; and how much on the master, or mistress? If they have kept no account, it is not unfair to presume, either, that it must arise from an intention to conceal, or that they are unfit for their situations.

A very minute inquiry must be gone into, of the quantity and quality of the food supplied to the children, and the divisions of rations for each day. If this system is unhappily to be continued, care must be taken that the allowance be sufficient, and of sound quality.

The next subject of inquiry is the clothing. Let an account be called for, of each year's expense under this head, dividing each article of dress, and shewing the average cost for each boy, or girl; specifying ages; stating what was *manufactured and made by the children*, and what supplied by contract; describing the quality and the number of each article of dress supplied to each boy and girl in every year; also the stock of clothes be-

longing to each child individually, specifying every article, with the sum total in the whole school. And here, I fear, the supply, poor as it will be found, will appear to have been considered rather as a common stock, than as belonging to individual children.

An inquiry should be made, as to what expenses have been incurred in each year for the erection and upholding of the different School-houses? What charges have been made by the masters for repairs, and by whom they were done; whether by tradesmen, or cobbled up by himself and boys, and charged to the Society as if done by regular workmen? What has been the annual expense for rent, taxes, and repairs of the Society's House in Dublin? What charges of Architects? What the amount of salaries, for Secretary, Register, &c. and what sums have been laid out for furniture for their residences?

The annual charge for new furniture for the different Schools; as also for beds, sheets, and blankets; demands a most serious scrutiny.

The bills for stationery, books, &c. should be *strictly* investigated, and compared with the expenditure in those articles in other school establishments.

Let *the gross cost of the education of each child*, the real and primary object of the Institution, be calculated, distinct from diet and clothing; and

it will be found as a drop in this gulf of extravagance.

Investigate the actual payments made to the Society by the master or mistress for work done by the children; how many hours in each day they are kept to labour; and the actual profit arising therefrom to the master.

Contrast these with the number of hours appropriated for their education, and see how those hours are occupied—what branches of learning—with the time allotted to each—and what hours in each day are allowed for play and recreation, with the general state of the health of the children in each school—the improvement they have made, with the instances of idiocy found among the scholars.

Another very important inquiry will be the number of children which have entered and left the Schools in each year; the number which have been apprenticed at the expiration of their stated time for education, and whether bound to the master or mistress, or to whom, with an account of the particular trade or business; also, what inquiry is made by the Local Visiting Committee after the progress and behaviour of the children during their apprenticeship.

Inquire how many have run away from their masters after being apprenticed, on an annual average, with the causes; and how many have

received the premium on serving out their apprenticeship.

Also, how many have claimed the marriage portion—the mode of determining the validity of their claims—and why seven years are allowed for claiming this.

Inquire into the accommodation of the children, in diet, bedding, cleanliness, and lodging, and compare it with that of the masters and mistresses; and why so few of Howard's excellent suggestions were adopted.

Inquire into the general moral habits of the Schools; how the children are employed on the Sabbath at home; how often they attend public worship; and how many of the female children have been seduced, whether by masters, overseers, or inspectors, with their ages, and what became of them.

Let the Committee be required to furnish the amount of their annual receipts from the following, and all other sources of income:

Royal bounty.

Private subscriptions.

King's letters, and grants by them.

Value of all lands in the hands of the masters, as part of their profits.

Ditto, ditto, let on lease to the masters or others.

Children's labour.

Sir Erasmus Smith's estates.

Bishop Pococke's ditto.

Lord Ranelagh's ditto.

Vryhoven's legacy, and all other legacies.

Interest arising from a sum of £40,000,
given to the Society.

Parliamentary grants.

Let this Charter School system be farther investigated on the fair statement of *Dr.* and *Cr.* as between the Committee of Fifteen and the Public. Deriving so large a sum as £40,000 a year from Parliament, let us see how the account stands.

By the Society's own shewing, there is a vast sum to account for, annually, over their expenditure.

They state the charge of board, education, clothing, masters, servants, &c. for each child to be £13 annually; and I shall state the account as it will stand on their own authority.

*The Chartered School Society in account
with the Public.*

<i>Dr.</i>	£.	<i>Cr.</i>	£.
To amount of parliamentary grants in Irish money from 1811 to 1817, for seven years.....	310,000	By 2500 children, at £13 per ann. each, for seven years ...	227,500
Permanent income, at £15,000 per ann. for seven years.....	105,000	By balance due to the public from 1811 to 1817	187,500
	415,000		415,000

In this statement, I have given the Society credit for a number of children, which I am persuaded is very considerably above what will be found in the Schools, as in all the investigations on record of the number of scholars, it was uniformly found, that the real number fell very far short of what had been stated to the public: and in the case of the Bishop of Raphoe's sermon for the Society, referred to by Mr. Howard in pages 58, 59, they were found to be only about two-thirds of the number*. I have, nevertheless, given them credit for 2500.

I have also stated the expense, as claimed by the Society for each child, at £13; but I can prove that this charge is most exorbitant. To do this, I need only refer to one of the best regulated schools in Dublin, that, at Bethesda Chapel; where there is something deserving the name of education; where the children are well clothed, comfortably lodged, and well fed; and all this for £10 per child, in the metropolis; where the articles of food, and the salaries of masters, are higher than in the country.

I have stated, that, even allowing the charge of £13 per child, the Committee of Fifteen stand

* Vide the account also of the Santry and Clontarf Schools, &c. page 59.

indebted to the Public in the prodigious sum of £187,500, in the short space of seven years. Let the investigation be carried back only to the year of the Union, and the amount to be satisfactorily accounted for, will be found enormous. In settling this account with the Chartered School Society, I must farther add, it will not be difficult to prove, that children may be well educated, boarded, and clothed, in the country of Ireland, for considerably less than £10 per child per annum: and whilst public or private contributors have a right to expect a *conscientious and economical expenditure of what is intrusted to the care of those who have the management of the funds*, I shall not be surely chargeable with calculating too low, in allowing the Society the Dublin average of £10 per child.

By calculating the expenses of the Charity for the average of seven years, from 1811 to 1817, for 2500 children, at £10 instead of £13, there will be a farther sum of £52,500 to be carried to the *Cr.* of the Public, and to the *Dr.* of the Society; leaving the vast sum of £240,000 to be accounted for, over their proper expenditure for the last seven years.

And in order farther to demonstrate that the allowance of £10 per annum, in my calculation, for each child, is very liberal, I need only refer

to the statement of the Society, on the 10th of April, 1788, which will be found at the close of the Parliamentary Report.

They state explicitly, “ that the annual charge
 “ to the public of each child actually in the care
 “ of the Society, did not exceed £7. 2s. 6d.
 “ including *maintenance, clothing, education,*
 “ *books, medicine, expense of masters and ser-*
 “ *vants, bedding, furniture, repair of houses, the*
 “ *Society's house in Dublin, and the different*
 “ *officers attendant thereon,*” &c. At this meeting, owing to the increased price of provisions, the masters were to be allowed 3d. per diem for the board of each child, in every school, instead of 2½d. as formerly allowed to such as were at a distance from Dublin.

Now, if £7. 2s. 6d. was sufficient in 1788 for the average expense of each child, including every description of charge, I may fairly presume, that, after calculating the advance in the prices of provisions and clothing, £9 will be fully sufficient to cover it at the present time : and if I am correct in this, the balance due from the Chartered School Society to the Country will be farther increased in the sum of £17,500, MAKING A TOTAL OF £257,500 UNACCOUNTED FOR DURING THE LAST SEVEN YEARS OF THEIR MANAGEMENT. Let this Chartered School system, in all its ineffi-

ciency and extravagance, be contrasted with the simple, efficient, and economical plan of daily schools, which I have briefly alluded to; and compare an expenditure of about £60,000 annually, on the *education, as it is called*, of about two thousand children, with the sound and useful education of TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND CHILDREN, AT LITTLE MORE THAN FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS PER ANNUM! and then judge between the two plans.

Is it not demonstrable, I would ask, that, according to the Chartered Schools Society's system, Parliament may go on voting hundreds of thousands, yea, millions of pounds, and Ireland still continue to be a land of discord and darkness? I now set forth the bane, and antidote. Here is the national evil I denounce, and the remedy I propose.

To prove the one, and commend the other, I only call for a renewal of that inquiry which the Irish Parliament sanctioned, and which the present state of Ireland, and the circumstances of the United Empire, render imperative on the British Senate to grant. The expense of the establishment is tremendous; the abuses have been proved in the Irish Parliament to be shocking; the beneficial results to the nation, comparatively speaking, next to nothing. The nation cannot bear the expense. The good proposed may be effected on

a truly national scale, at a comparatively small expense. The funds of the Corporation, fixed and parliamentary, are sufficient to educate all the poor of Ireland. I could recommend a plan, simple yet efficient, for the education of all, and at a small expense: a plan which will include in its management, Churchmen, Presbyterians, Dissenters, Quakers, and Catholics. This union of all religious creeds and communions, would prove a sure pledge of future harmony and peace for Ireland, and insure at once a faithful, judicious, and economical expenditure of the funds. IN THE NAME, AND ON THE BEHALF OF THE POOR OF IRELAND, I CALL UPON PARLIAMENT TO GRANT AN INVESTIGATION. AS PARLIAMENT VALUES IRELAND'S PEACE, PROSPERITY, AND HONOUR, LET HER POOR BE EDUCATED; AND POPERY WILL SOON LOSE ITS INFLUENCE.

Had well regulated day-schools been established in every parish, at the commencement of the Chartered School Society, for the Catholic and Protestant population, without any restraints; had every thing interfering with their peculiarities of religious opinions been carefully avoided, restricting the books in use in the Schools to the Spelling-book and the Testament, Ireland would have presented, at this day, A COUNTRY EN-

LIGHTENED, UNITED, AND HAPPY; at least such is my conviction. She would not have needed legions of soldiers to keep her population quiet. Respect for the laws, social order, and domestic peace, would have taken place of those deadly feuds, lawless combinations, and crimes, which have so long disgraced Ireland. I have said, *let the poor be educated, and Popery will soon lose its influence*. This is not an opinion hastily formed. Through the knowledge obtained by the reading of the Sacred Scriptures, where the instruction in reading was given by a Catholic master, and where not a word was ever said respecting the errors of the Church of Rome, I have been astonished at the remarks made by children, on some of the peculiarities of their doctrine and worship.

There are not a few also in Ireland, who were bred up in the bosom of the Church of Rome, who do not confess to the Priest, who eat meat on fast days, will hear a sermon in a Protestant church, and who would have left her communion long ago, but for the shame of deserting that Church whilst under political persecution. It is not, I would humbly submit, the continuance of penal statutes, and political depression, that can ever remove the dire effects of centuries of misrule*. The

* When I speak of misrule, I speak of times that are past.

Irish character is well expressed in her motto: "GENTLE WHEN STROKED, FIERCE WHEN PROVOKED." Give me a chosen band of twenty or thirty schoolmasters, and plenty of Bibles, and I pledge myself to enter the most turbulent, disturbed, disloyal, and barbarous district in all Ireland; and in a very short time, under the blessing of God, do more to tranquillize the inhabitants, than an army of twenty or thirty thousand soldiers. O! it is full time to try what gentleness and kindness can do in subduing those passions, which ages have contributed to rouse and strengthen. Present to the Irish peasantry, then, the olive-branch of peace, — feel for their wrongs, — pity their ignorance, — convince them that you sympathize with them under their national depression, that you are disinterestedly seeking their prosperity; and assuredly you will meet with their confidence and gratitude. When the poor of Ireland shall be enlightened by a sound and suitable education, — elevated to the rank of freemen, — enjoying the protection of the laws, — their industry encouraged, — their nobility and gentry resident, — a safe and useful direction given to their native energies, and inoculated with the solid good qualities of their English and Scottish fellow-subjects, the day will not be far distant, I trust, when the Rose, the Thistle, and the Shamrock, shall so harmonize,

as to prove, in every quarter of the globe, the emblems of a free, united, and powerful Empire, the terror of despotism, and the harbinger of peace and good-will, of civil and religious liberty, to the whole family of man.

REGULATIONS IN USE IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE
HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

APPENDIX.

IN the year 1806, several persons in London, deeply affected with the deplorable ignorance of the poor in Ireland, met to consider of the practicability of forming a Society for the education and religious instruction of their long neglected and much injured fellow subjects in that portion of the empire. The necessity for such an institution was too obvious to be mistaken, and too urgent to admit of delay. A subscription was opened, and "The Hibernian Society" appeared, for the purpose of establishing schools, and circulating the Holy Scriptures among the lower classes of the Irish, in their native land. The simplicity of its plan has been no small recommendation to this Society, and has obtained for it a very extensive patronage, composed of churchmen and dissenters, and including in its committee every clergyman and dissenting minister who is a subscriber. It interferes with no particular creed among its supporters; and, among its objects, it seeks not to proselyte any, but throws wide open its doors to all who are desirous of education.

The only books allowed to be used in the schools, are, the Spelling-book, with lessons taken from the

Scriptures, and the Bible, without note or comment. This Society has, under the blessing of God, gradually increased from a very small beginning, and has, at this time, in its schools 27,568 children and adults, receiving daily instruction in English and Irish. The schools are situated in the counties of Mayo, Galway, Sligo, Leitrim, Fermanagh, Donegal, Roscommon, Cavan, Cork, Tyrone, Monaghan, Longford, and Waterford. The education of each child costs the Society not more than about four shillings per annum.

Over the masters are placed district inspectors, who are continually engaged in visiting the schools within their appointed limits; examining, at each inspection, the actual progress of every scholar, marking their improvement, certifying the numbers present, and reporting the state of each particular school. To check, or prevent, any partiality, or unfair dealings, on the part of the masters or inspectors, each school, as far as possible, is put under the eye of a respectable clergyman in the neighbourhood, who acts as visitor.

The regulations and checks upon the masters in the schools of the London Hibernian Society, are ingenious and efficient.

In consequence of the masters being paid so much for each scholar, it became extremely important to prevent fraud in the number of the children on the books of each school.

The first regulation, or check, is the roll. This is a large sheet, containing a marginal column for the name of each child, with seventy-eight lines, or divisions, drawn from the top to the bottom: these are crossed by another line, which forms a division

opposite every name. At the head of the roll, which is to serve for one quarter of the year, the three months are marked, with the succeeding days of each, omitting the Sundays, which will leave seventy-eight days for school attendance. At an early hour after school commences, the roll is called over; and in the column for the day, opposite each child's name, is marked P for present, or A for absent.

This may not be considered as any check against fraud on the part of the master; therefore, to ascertain the correctness of the master's entry in the roll, the inspector is directed to visit the schools at a time when he is not expected, when he compares the roll for the day with the actual attendance, calling over every child's name: besides this, he interrogates the children as to their attendance on past days*. Besides these unexpected visits of the inspector, there are set times for his examining the scholars. At the last of these in the quarter, he takes an account of the number present; which is considered, by the regulation, as the average attendance, for which the master is to be paid. One hundred names are found entered on the roll, but only eighty-five are present at the inspection. These are all he can claim payment for, unless he can prove that some are then absent from sickness, or other admissible cause, who regularly attended through the quarter. When the inspector settles with the master, he adds up the total

* He indorses on the roll paper, the number of children who answered to their names. Thus, for example:

The roll contains..... 100 pupils.

Present 90

Absent, Nos. 18, 21, 30, 31, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 49.

of absent days, which have been marked in the roll during the three months. Thus, suppose there should be seven hundred and ninety-five days of non-attendance on the part of one or other of the hundred children: he divides the 795 by 78, the number of days in the quarter, which will give a deduction of ten to be made farther from the eighty-five. This leaves seventy-five to be paid for.

The next check is the class paper. This is kept by each master, and contains the names of all the pupils on the roll, recording the day on which they entered the school, and the class they commenced in. Each class has a column on the paper, in which is entered, opposite the pupil's name, the date of his promotion from that class, when his name is entered in that to which he is promoted*. Correct attention to this, at once exhibits the class in which each pupil entered at his commencement, the period he remained there, and his progress for the year. By the regulation, it is ordered, that no master shall be allowed payment for any scholar in the alphabet class, who is not fit for promotion in one month; nor for the junior spellers, who are not fit for promotion in five months, which completes half a year from their commencement; nor for any senior speller, who is not capable of commencing his Spelling-book reading tasks in the beginning of his fourth quarter; nor for any of the latter, who are not fit for being promoted to the Testament class in the beginning of their second year.

* The class paper has eight columns, headed as follow; viz. Names of pupils, Alphabet class, Junior spelling, Senior spelling, Spelling-book readers, Testament, Bible, Writing and accounts.

This last regulation affords an effectual check upon any attempted fraud of the masters, in making false entries on the roll.

By the class paper there is a prescribed term for the proficiency of the scholars. We shall suppose that the master has marked the attendance of children as regular, when they were absent. Here he is sure of detection, in consequence of the child being found, on the examination of the inspector, either in the class longer than the prescribed time, or unfairly promoted, not being qualified for it in consequence of his actual non-attendance; and he is deducted for in settling with the master.

Whenever an inspector visits a school, he begins his examination with the alphabet class; and, after examining each pupil, he writes his initials after the date of each pupil's entrance, in the column of the class wherein he then stands. This is to prevent the master carrying forward a false promotion before he calls for settlement, as he is to be settled with according to the state of his classification on the day of the general inspection. If any of the pupils be found unfit for the class they have been promoted to by the master, the inspector marks the circumstance on the class paper, and the master is to be settled with as if the pupil had not been promoted: and if the time allotted by the regulations for his promotion is elapsed, a deduction is made in settling with the master. If, however, on referring to the roll, it should appear that his attendance during the quarter had been so bad, that promotion could not reasonably be expected, he is not deducted for; the master having already suffered a deduction for the absent days of this child,

as determined on the day of the inspector's examination, as before stated.

These regulations have been found, during some years' experience, fully to prevent fraud on the part of the masters, or inspectors, and to insure the proficiency of the children in the various schools. At first, there was considerable opposition on the part of the masters; and, in some cases, an abandonment of their situation, rather than submit to them. And this has been revived at different times by some few, in consequence of other schools in the neighbourhood not having laid such restraints on their masters. But it is now generally submitted to throughout the establishment. There is another branch of the London Hibernian Society's regulations, which has been found most beneficial. The Committee having been convinced of the vast importance of storing the infant minds of the scholars with a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, with a view of producing right principles, and moral and virtuous habits and conduct in after life, were aware that it was owing to this that Scotland has become a pattern to all surrounding countries, not so much from the superiority of their plan of teaching to read, as from their leading the scholars, in early life, into a knowledge of that book which teaches to give every man his due, "tribute to whom tribute, honour to whom honour;" and which gives the best security for their growing up into life, industrious, peaceable, virtuous, and happy. It is therefore expected from each master, that all the scholars in the senior spelling class shall commit to memory, and be able to repeat to the inspector, three pages of the Scriptural lessons in No. 2 Spelling-book within the

quarter; Spelling-book readers, six pages; and all in the Testament and Bible classes, from four to six chapters in the Old or New Testament within the quarter. If any of the children are found deficient in their respective tasks, a deduction is made on settling with the masters.

The masters and mistresses are ordered to pay strict attention to the cleanliness of the children; and to watch against, and suppress, every appearance of indecency and immorality in their demeanour.

So great is the eagerness of the children to commit the Scriptures to memory, that it is very common for one child to be able to repeat a whole Gospel and an Epistle; and not a few, from 44 to 47 chapters. The children are also allowed to take their Testaments and Bibles home with them in the evening. These, which are new to the poor Catholic parents, are read in their hearing; and many very many pleasing instances I could give, of the happiest effects produced on the morals of the whole family. Nor are the beneficial effects of the school confined to the children and their respective families: the progress of education, and the circulation of the Sacred Scriptures in the English and Irish languages, have created a new moral atmosphere in these districts; and so visible has been the change, that it has attracted the notice of persons visiting those districts, and led them to inquire after the cause of this improvement of manners.

In the course of the London Hibernian Society's progress, they have had much to contend with. They have for many years experienced the neglect and indifference of those who might have been expected to rank among their friends. This, in consequence of

the progressive benefits arising to the neighbourhoods wherein the schools are situated, is, I hope, decreasing: many respectable clergymen of the established Church, and gentlemen, are now countenancing the schools, and acting as visitors.

But the Society has had much also to contend against on the part of open enemies. Many have been the attempts, on the part of the Catholic clergy, to break up and disperse the schools; and I am sorry to say, that, in not a few cases, they have been successful. These hostilities have elicited many gratifying instances of true Irish independence of character. How often have the poor parents pleaded with the priests for permission to send their children to the Society's schools, and, in the face of the most arbitrary refusal, they have ventured to ask for a reason; but no reason, except his will, would be given. Often, after a severe struggle between subjection to priestly domination and an affectionate concern for their children's education, the latter has prevailed, and, braving all consequences, they have continued to send their children to the schools. Whilst I record these instances of hostility, I am happy in being able to mention some very pleasing instances of the reverse of all this. As one of the inspectors was passing along the road on a Sunday, he met the master, who teaches the Society's school, which is held in the Catholic chapel, and which, much to the honour of the priest, is countenanced by him. Being near the chapel, and service being about to commence, the master invited the inspector to go with him. He replied, he did not understand Latin. "Poh!" said the master, smiling, "it is no matter, you will hear a good sermon; your

presence there will keep the people from being prejudiced, and it will be highly pleasing to the priest, who is a good friend to the schools." The inspector consented; and the priest, who knew him, perceiving him come in, sent to request the loan of his Irish Testament. Having got it, he opened it at the chapter from which the Gospel for the day had been taken, and being a good Irish scholar, read it very audibly in the hearing of the people. He then addressed them as follows: "You have now heard, in a language you all understand, what I before read during the mass in a language you did not understand; and you all seem highly pleased with what I have now read. Now, this is one of the good books taught in the free school, opened for the instruction of your children, in this chapel, supported, free of all expense to you, by good people in England. The English books also provided by this Society for your children, are very good. One of them, the Testament, is the word of God; and, if you wish to know the difference between the Catholic Testament and the English and Irish Testaments, provided by the Society, it is the same as if I should say, four and two make six; and you should say, two and four make six, which you all know is the same in the end. You all know that I permit these schools; and not only permit them, but I command you all to send your children to them; and I shall be much displeased with the man who neglects so great a blessing provided for his family. These schools will benefit your children and yourselves: your children, educated in them, will not be, like you, a poor ignorant people: and who can tell but the words which you will hear your children read to you out of those

books, may be the means of saving your souls, and of bringing you to everlasting life?"

In another part of the country, the school had been so opposed by some persons in the neighbourhood, as to discourage the master to such a degree, as to talk of giving up. A well-disposed Catholic priest hearing of this, sent for the master, and asked him to stay all night with him. When the master rose in the morning, he found his host was gone out. On his return to breakfast, he desired the master to try one day more. This he was unwilling to do; but at the earnest solicitation of the priest, he consented. When they came near the school-house, the master was surprised to hear the voices of children, expecting to have found it deserted. On entering, he found above fourscore children assembled, and waiting for him. The worthy priest had risen very early, and had been over mountains and bogs, from house to house, to induce the parents to send their children to school. The number afterwards increased very considerably.

Among many pleasing instances of the advantage of education to the poor children, by preparing them in very early life for the trials and difficulties they may meet with, I shall only give one afflicting tale. One of the masters passing along the road in the evening, was attracted by the cries of young children in a cabin by the road side. He entered, and witnessed a moving scene; the corpse of a woman lying on the straw, on which she had expired, surrounded by her four children, the eldest a boy about 12 years of age. On inquiry of the boy, he learned that his father had died about a fortnight before, of a fever; that their mother had caught the fever, and died that morning; and that no

one had had the humanity to enter their wretched habitation since her death, but himself. Unable to render them any assistance, and being on a journey, he left the house and the poor afflicted children, as he found them, without fire or candle, light or comfort. Early the next morning, the same account was brought by another master, who had witnessed the same scene as he passed. They were still alone, and around the remains of their parent. Observing the oldest boy more composed than the rest, he inquired of him, and heard the same distressing account. The poor boy closed his narrative by saying, "While my mother lay dying, and neglected by her neighbours, who feared the distemper, I gave her all the comfort in my power: possessed of my Testament, which I got in the Hibernian Free-school that I attended before the affliction of the family, I constantly read to her about Jesus Christ; and what she heard gave her great ease of mind. When she was dying, I kneeled by her, and still read to her about Him; and begged of her not to be troubled about us, for the Lord was so good, he would surely provide. My poor mother had her senses to the last; attended with eagerness to what I read, and to my request; and although she could not speak, she seemed to consent to all, and to die with great composure of mind." When he had ended, the master asked him what he intended to do? He replied, that "he did not know; that he had no friends there, his father having come from a distant part of the kingdom a few years before, to work at his trade of heckling flax, and that his sister was too young to travel with him to beg; but that he was not uneasy;

that he trusted in God, and was sure that He would be their friend."

The above needs no comment. I am happy to record a remarkable answer in Providence to the faith of the poor dying mother and the little boy. On this afflicting tale being related to the worthy Agent of the Hibernian Society, means were used for their relief. Their melancholy and destitute circumstances being made known to Lady L—, she immediately gave five pounds for their present support, requesting to know the ages of the female children, in order that they might be provided for in some of the charitable asylums in that country. The boy and his sisters were properly clothed; and, as they had neither firing, bed, nor food in the wretched hut, they were conveyed to a neighbouring house, to be taken care of till her ladyship should give directions concerning them. The boy is a fine, healthy, intelligent lad: he had been, until his father was taken ill, at the Society's school at B—, and was in the Testament class. The man in whose family the children are placed for the present, is a Catholic. Struck with the effects of the boy's reading the Scriptures to his dying mother, and the happy consequences to the orphans, he has requested a Testament for his own use.

In proof of the growing liberality of the Catholic priests in Ireland, towards the education of the poor, and of the decrease of priestly influence on the minds of the poor people of the Romish church, I state the following facts.

A respectable Catholic priest, in a letter to the Agent of the London Hibernian Society's Schools,

recommending a Catholic master to be employed by him, writes thus: "I have ever felt anxious for the instruction of the poor of every description, but especially of my own communion, whenever that object could be attained without compromising their faith; and as I could discover no tendency in the schools under your patronage in the parish of C—, contrary to either faith or morals, if I did not give them my public sanction, at least I gave them no opposition."

A poor man, who lived in the neighbourhood of one of the schools where the priest had commanded his parishioners to take their children from the Society's school, waited on him, and, with much respect, asked him why he wished the children to be taken from the school? The priest replied, "It is my pleasure." The poor man said, "I know, please your Reverence, that it is your pleasure, but I have taken the liberty of calling on you to know *why* it is your pleasure?" The priest told him that he was impertinently inquisitive, and that he would give him no other answer. The poor man then presumed to expostulate with him, and exclaimed, "O! dear sir, learning is a great blessing! I feel the want of it: let me have my poor children instructed in the good school now happily in this neighbourhood. O! dear sir, learning is a good thing!" The priest, unmoved, made no other reply, than—"it was his pleasure to disperse the schools; that it should be so, and that he would punish all who dared to disobey." The poor man then very gravely asked the priest, "What punishment he intended to inflict on the parent who continued his children at the school?" The priest, with a degree

of surprise, asked, "Why he made the inquiry?" To which he received this answer: "BECAUSE, PLEASE YOUR REVERENCE, I THINK IT BETTER THAT I SHOULD BEAR THE PUNISHMENT, THAN THAT MY CHILDREN SHOULD WANT EDUCATION." The poor man was driven from the presence of the priest; but remained firm in his resolution, and has ever since sent his children to the school.

THE END.

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To

JOSEPH H. H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H. H. H. H. H. H. H. H.

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